

A
R E V I E W
OF THE 2
D O C T R I N E
OF
PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY,
ILLUSTRATED
BY DR. PRIESTLEY;

IN WHICH IS EVIDENTLY DEMONSTRATED THE
ERRONEOUSNESS AND INCONGRUITY OF HIS
DOCTRINE; AND WHEREIN IS CLEARLY SHOWN
THAT MAN IS ENDUED WITH A POWER OF
SELF-DETERMINATION AND FREE AGENCY, IN
OPPOSITION TO WHAT DR. PRIESTLEY
HAS LATELY ENDEAVOURED TO MAINTAIN.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH FISHER,
VICAR OF DRAX, YORKSHIRE,
AUTHOR OF THE REMARKS UPON THE REMARKER,
ON A LATE PUBLICATION,
BY WILLIAM BURGH, ESQ; L. L. D.

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PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

Dr. D. J. L. L. L.



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[illegible]

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R E M A R K S

UPON THE

REV. MR. TEMPLE's Publication,

IN ANSWER TO

WILLIAM BURGH, Esq; L. L. D.

IN which is thoroughly considered the Arguments advanced by Mr. TEMPLE, and other Modern Unitarians, against the Divinity of Jesus Christ; and the Unitarian Doctrine clearly shown to be contrary to the Doctrine of the Scriptures, and in which the Doctrine of the one Godhead, or Divinity of the Father and the Son, is plainly proved from Revelation, and also shown not to be contrary to Human Reason: A Work much approved of by many eminent and learned Divines of the Established Church; Some of which have spoken of it very respectfully in Works by them since published, and others have writ very obliging Letters to the Author for publishing it, particularly one Gentleman, well known in the Literary World, who in his Letter has been pleased to entitle it,

AN APPEAL TO COMMON SENSE.



As I live at a distance from the press, I hope the reader will excuse the following Errata, which are the principal ones, and that he will be pleased to correct them with his pen.

E R R A T A.

- Page 3, line 4, between *mankind* and *ever*, insert *in general*.
Page 4, line 24, dele *as*.
Page 8, line 8, dele the *semicolon*.
Ditto, line 30, for *so this*, read *set his*.
Page 13, line 23, insert *the* between *of* and *things*.
Page 15, line 5, dele *and*.
Page 18, note † lines 6, 7, dele *that they are the principal properties of matter; but*.
Page 22, line 35, insert *I*, between *this* and *think*.
Ditto, line 36, for *no* read *not*.
Page 23, line 20, after *power* insert a *comma*, and dele *over*.
Page 25, line 3, for *demonstrates* read *demonstrate*.
Page 40, line 27, a *comma* after *that*.
Page 41, line 10, a *comma* after *necessarian*.
Page 44, line 5, dele *that*.
Page 50, line 13, for *which* read *as*.
Page 53, line 10, for *a* read *as*.
Page 87, line 4, for *farmer's* read *farmer*.



TO THE
Most Reverend Father in God,
WILLIAM,

By Divine Providence,

Lord Archbishop of YORK.

MY LORD,

AS it is well known within the circle of my acquaintance, that I never was addicted to flattery, but that on the contrary, I usually speak truth boldly and with firmness, even when it militates against the opinions or practices of my superiors, I may, therefore, I hope, without the least suspicion of dissimulation, be allowed to address your Grace as one of those dignified Divines in our Church, who in an age of general intemperance, pride, extravagance, luxury, dissipation, and other fashionable vices, continues both by precept and example, to discountenance and discourage these, and at the same time to recommend and practice the contrary, or rather indeed to set an example of every religious and

moral virtue. It is wholly from this consideration, that I have taken the liberty of dedicating to your Grace the following sheets; because, in them, I hope I have totally extirpated necessity, as the absolute cause of all the actions of men, and as a most plausible excuse, pointed out by Dr. Priestley, to a giddy unthinking multitude, whose general conduct in life is the very reverse to that of your Grace. If my labours herein contribute in the least to effect this, and to restrain that tide of immorality which has spread itself through almost all ranks of people, I have my reward, and that they may do this, is the earnest prayer of,

MY LORD,

Your Grace's

Most obedient humble Servant,

DEAR, Jan. 29. }
1779.

JOSEPH FISHER.

PRE-

P R E F A C E.

I Waited for some time after Dr. Priestley had published his Treatise upon Philosophical Necessity, before I began to write against it, hoping that some other Gentleman would have undertaken to answer the same; but in this, being disappointed, I have written the following sheets: If they be favourably received by the public, and be of any service, however small, towards the discovery and establishment of truth, the end of their being published, is in some measure answered. I cannot but look upon the Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity as false, and also as very dangerous to the community, if universally embraced with all its consequences, and more especially so, in this age of general dissipation and depravity: In an age, when to use the words of a worthy

and learned divine * “ A spirit of idleness
 “ and dissipation, of luxury and intempe-
 “ rance, hath pervaded, and in some sort
 “ infected all ranks and degrees of people.”
 The truth of this passage is visible and ap-
 parent, though truly lamentable. If then
 we the inhabitants of these kingdoms be
 thus idle, dissipated, luxurious, and in-
 temperate, which is, alas, too true! with
 what a plausible excuse does the Doctrine
 of Necessity furnish us, whether considered
 as a national body, or as individuals? If
 that doctrine be true, it follows that this
 idleness, dissipation, &c. as well as every
 other fashionable vice now practised amongst
 us, were all appointed, decreed, and ne-
 cessitated to be; and in this very age, and
 at this very time too, as they are all *events*
which could not possibly be otherwise: and
 also, that God is the author and only
 cause of all these fashionable vices and
 evils; that they all tend to produce the
greatest sum of good possible, which could
not be attained by any other means. If so,
 who is, or can be to blame? I hope every
 one, however vicious in inclination, or in
 practice, if he turns his thoughts inward,
 and seriously examines the intellectual

* Dr. Cooper, Archdeacon of York, in his excel-
 lent Charge delivered to the Clergy at York, May 7,
 1773.

powers of his own mind, will perceive that he has a principle of free agency within him, a power of choice and self-determination, enabling him to resist, restrain, and overcome such vicious inclinations and practices, insomuch that he alone, and not necessity, is blameable for his vicious conduct. The predominant vice at present seems to be pride, which stimulates every person almost without exception, to vie with his superiors in pomp, parade, and extravagance. To support these, men are naturally tempted to break their promises, agreements, bonds, oaths, and most solemn engagements; in short, to be guilty of every species of fraud and oppression. From hence, arise bankruptcies, duels, suicides, now so common amongst us. I am really grieved to observe, that examples of this kind are set to the lower classes of people, by those of high rank, who wish to be called the polite and fashionable part of mankind, and who ought particularly to set examples of every thing which is praise-worthy. Do not we find many in very high walks of life, persons of large independent fortunes, as well as persons in the most eminent and dignified places, who live above their incomes, by conforming themselves to the present destructive mode and fashion of pride and extravagance; so that if their servants

vants and attendants do not live and appear in the same gay, splendid, and extravagant manner, as they themselves do, they must be dismissed their service? Nay (what I am the most sorry for) the very same gaiety, the same pompous appearance, and the same excess, have seized upon many of the Ministers of the Church of the humble and lowly Jesus; nay, even many of the Prelates thereof; so that pride, pomp, and an extravagant and splendid appearance, are become requisites, almost indispensibly necessary to obtain preferment in Church or State, whilst modest merit, a frugal behaviour, and a decent, but plain appearance, are frequently kept down in the lowest offices and employments, and almost wholly precluded all possibility of rising, because the mode of living, and the appearance of persons endowed with these virtues, are too low for the notice of the great and gay. It is very true, we have (blessed be God) examples in high life, both in Church and State, which are contrary to this. Indeed, if we had not, we should probably before this, have been as Sodom and Gomorrah; for whenever idleness, dissipation, extravagance, luxury, and intemperance, with other vices now fashionable amongst us, become universal or nearly so in any kingdom or state, one may venture to foretell the downfall and destruc-

destruction thereof are near at hand, and that they will certainly happen very soon, unless a speedy and effectual reformation intervene. Notwithstanding this, let it be observed, that these vices, however fashionable or prevailing, were not necessarily appointed and decreed to become thus almost general; on the contrary, if true humility, frugality, sobriety, &c. were adopted in general by persons in high life, the example and practice would soon descend through the lower ranks of people. For I will venture to maintain this as a certain truth; that if learning, knowledge, industry, frugality, and sobriety, were as great and as sure recommendations to preferment and employment in lucrative offices, as pomp, a splendid appearance, gaiety, and extravagance are, an effectual reformation would quickly ensue; because these virtues would then be a certain means of procuring a decent subsistence and support for the men endowed therewith; and also for their families depending upon them. I declare, that I say not this out of envy, disappointment, or despair, but because I believe the whole of what I have above asserted to be true, and what if reduced into immediate and general practice, may save the nation from entire and impending ruin. I have as much as I wish for, because I have as
much

much as will maintain my family and myself, with all the necessaries of life; and as to what are called the conveniences of life, they seldom add to our real happiness, and therefore may be called in some sense, the superfluities thereof. If I obtained more than I have, I would receive it thankfully, and would endeavour to use the same properly as becomes a Christian, by making a better provision for my children, than I now can do with what I now enjoy; and with the rest, I would endeavour to alleviate the distresses of my fellow-creatures. Riches may be desirable for such ends as these, but I hope I shall never anxiously desire more than I have for any end whatever. There is only one thing I earnestly wish for in this world, with a temporal view; which is, to have as much as I now possess, in a higher and more healthy country, such an one as my native country is, so that I might enjoy a better state of bodily health than I now do, and a better than I probably ever shall do in so low, flat, and foggy a country as this is where I now live. I shall only add, that I beg to inform the reader, that I have (in the following sheets) studied two things as much as possible. The one is *brevity*, which arose in part from want of time, of which I have but little to spare, from doing the duty of two parishes as a Clergyman, and also

P R E F A C E.

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also attending a school. The other is, *plainness of expression*, which I think is necessary for every one to regard, who writes for the public, because an author should write to inform his readers, even the most ignorant of them, rather than to puzzle and confound them, by attempting to adorn and embellish his writing with affected expressions, or flights of oratory, in order to shew his own learning or elegance of style.

REVIEW,

PREFACE.

xi

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REVISED

REVIEW, &c.

AS soon as I saw an advertisement of "The Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity illustrated," by so learned and ingenious a man as Dr. Priestley; an earnest desire for information concerning that subject, induced me to purchase the book, supposing that the most likely and probable, as well as the most strong and convincing arguments, that could be brought to support the doctrine, would be contained in the same. And to speak ingenuously, I was not disappointed, for I found the doctrine supported by a train of arguments in a great measure new, and many of them surprizingly ingenious. Yet I am so far from being convinced of the truth of the Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity thus illustrated, that I am more convinced of the falsity of that doctrine, and more firmly rivetted in my belief of the contrary since I have read Dr. Priestley's book. Because since the subject has been undertaken without effect, by a man of so great natural as well as acquired abilities, and assisted by a library of so many valuable books, ancient and modern; I conceive the doctrine to be incapable of any tolerable clear demonstration, and to be founded in error. In consequence of these things, I have made the following inquiry into the doctrine of philosophical necessity as illustrated by Dr. Priestley, at the same time endeavouring, to point out the many and various

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errors

errors therein attempted to be supported, together with the bad consequences arising to individuals, as well as to the people at large, from such erroneous doctrines being cordially embraced as truths, and reduced to actual practice in social life. How far the execution of such my intention is performed in a candid and impartial manner, I leave to the judgment of the public, whilst I can truly declare, that I have endeavoured as much as I possibly could, to divest myself of any prejudices I may have imbibed either from education or preconceived opinions, during the time of such my enquiry, because I am fully convinced that truth ought to be embraced when clearly discovered, however contrary it be to what we believed before. I am also very sensible of the great danger of prejudice arising from opinions formerly entertained, together with the extreme difficulty of wholly eradicating that natural bias. I therefore resolved, wherever things appeared to be in some measure dubious, or supported by reasons almost equal; in such a case to give up the point in favour of the doctrine of necessity. This method of practice I adopted, in order to throw (as it were) some weight into the opposite scale, thus endeavouring to bring the bias or prejudice arising from pre-conceived opinions to an equilibrium.

With this resolution, I shall enquire into, or examine every section of Dr. Priestley's Doctrine, assenting to every thing he advances, as far as conviction or apparent truth will permit. And where I am dissentient, I hope this declaration, that I am very clear of my being totally free from rancour or hatred against Dr. Priestley or his doctrine, will be a sufficient apology. With a mind, I trust, in the state above described, I enter upon the first section, which Dr. Priestley entitles "A true State of the Question respecting Liberty and Necessity." He says, "one of the chief sources of the difference of opinion respecting the subject of liberty and necessity, and likewise of much of the difficulty, that has attended the discussion of it, seems to have been a want of attention to the proper stating of the question."

The

The Doctor then proceeds to state it, and says, (page 2d) " In the first place I would observe, that I
 " allow to man *all the liberty or power that is possible*
 " *in itself*, and to which the ideas of mankind ever
 " go, which is the power of doing whatever they *will*
 " *or please*, both with respect to the operations of their
 " minds and the motions of their bodies, *uncontrolled by*
 " *any foreign principle or cause*. Thus every man is
 " at liberty to turn his thoughts to whatever subject he
 " pleases, to consider the reasons for or against any
 " scheme or proposition, and to reflect upon them as
 " long as he shall think proper, as well as to walk
 " wherever he pleases, and to do whatever his hands
 " and other limbs are capable of doing."

The above words express all the liberty I ever shall contend for, as belonging to man. Every idea I can conceive to constitute man's liberty, and to make a free self-determining agent, seems to be fully expressed, and without reserve set forth in the above-cited words. If man be allowed " all the liberty or power that is possible," it is certainly possible for the Supreme Being, who is omnipotent or almighty, to create man a free self-determining agent, and also " possible in itself" to give him power to act, think, and determine as freely, and with as much liberty as man can express in words, or even possibly conceive in imagination. If we assert this to be impossible, we limit and confine almighty power, by making it unable to effect what man can have a plain notion of, and can comprehend in idea at least, and therefore what does not imply a contradiction. Since then Dr. Priestley allows man " all the liberty possible," I am induced from his own words, to conclude him an absolute Antinecessarian, even in opposition to his own doctrine. I would not wish any man to say more for liberty than Dr. Priestley has said in the words above cited; yet, it is plain, (though this is the first part of his stating the question, and is entirely to my satisfaction) that we only agree in words, whilst our notions are extremely different, as the sequel demonstrates, by which our meanings are made more explicit. In the next place (pages 2d and 3d) Dr. Priestley gives

us the words of Mr. Hobbes, which he calls "a clear and happy illustration of this subject." I shall therefore, I hope, be excused, if I consider this illustration as entirely co-inciding with Dr. Priestley's sentiments on the matter. Mr. Hobbes, as cited by Dr. Priestley, says, "liberty is the absence of all impediments to action that are not contained in the nature and intrinsic quality of the agent. As for example, water is said to descend freely, or to have liberty to descend by the channel of the river, because there is no impediment that way, but not across, because the banks are impediments: And though the water cannot ascend, yet men never say it wants liberty to ascend, but the faculty or power, because the impediment is in the nature of the water and intrinsically." This example of water, here brought for so clear and happy an illustration of this subject," appears to me nothing to the purpose. The definition of liberty here given, is "the absence of all impediments to action, that are not contained in the nature and intrinsic quality of the agent *." Now as water in the

* Water, as well as all matter whatever that we are acquainted with, is incapable of being an agent in any case whatever, unless it be first acted upon, and therefore the nature and intrinsic quality of water is wholly passive, and can only act as influenced, or acted upon first by something else. For though Dr. Priestley in his *Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit*, observes that a system of matter, organized in a particular manner, may possibly become active and percipient; yet, granting this for the sake of argument, activity and perception certainly are not natural and intrinsic qualities of water, or other matter considered as such, because universal experience demonstrates to us that every thing which we call common dead matter, as water is, never shews the least signs of being endowed with a power of perception or activity, but will continue in its present state till acted upon by something foreign to itself, and whether that thing acting, be called attraction, repulsion, or whatever else; yet it is allowed, I believe, by every one to be something foreign to the dead matter, and not something within itself, or not to be an inherent property and intrinsic quality of the same. For though Dr. Priestley argues with Mr. Locke, that thinking and perception may be superadded to certain systems of matter, yet neither they, nor I believe, any

the example is to be considered as the agent. "The nature and intrinsic quality" of water, as well as of all other matter, is certainly (according to Sir Isaac Newton) a *vis inertiae*, power of inactivity, or power of resisting all, and every manner of change from its present state, whether it be a state of rest or motion, which power of resistance (whether it be called nature intrinsic, quality, or whatever else) is always proportional to the mass or quantity of matter, and requires a proportional force to overcome it. The nature and intrinsic quality of water, (I say) once at rest, like all other matter is, to continue in its present state, without either being at liberty, or having a natural and inherent power, to ascend or descend, unless by some extraneous force impressed or acting upon it, so far is it from being at liberty to descend by its own nature, when all impediments to action are removed that are not contained in its own nature. If water once be at rest, it will for ever remain so, unless the *vis inertiae* or power of resistance be overcome by some adequate force or power.

But it may be said, gravity or attraction will cause it naturally to descend. True. But gravity and attraction are only mere terms invented to express that force, whereby bodies mutually gravitate to, or are attracted by, one another. And whether that force be called gravity, attraction, repulsion, magnetism, electricity, or other power, the cause is latent, and I believe hitherto unknown to the greatest philosopher upon earth, unless it be (which appears to me very probable) a continued exertion of the Almighty's power and will, which, if suspended, water, once at rest, would probably have no natural liberty to descend, nor any matter the least power to alter its present situation, whether of motion or rest. If then man has no more inherent liberty or power of action than water has of descending, as compared in this

any other modern philosopher will say that every part and particle of matter has these properties or qualities naturally or intrinsically, but only as properties which may possibly be super-added to certain organized systems of matter.

example

example, which Dr. Priestley gives "as a clear and "happy illustration of this subject," it necessarily follows, that they are both merely passive, and have neither of them any liberty or power whatever of acting, unless they be first acted upon by some extraneous force or power, so exerted as to overcome their natural inactivity or power of resistance; no matter what that force or power be called, whether with the old philosophers it be called an *occult quality*, or with the moderns it be called *gravity*, or with Dr. Priestley it be called a *motive*, as the real or primary efficient cause of this occult quality, of gravity, and of the motive, are all equally unknown. After this citation from Mr. Hobbes, Dr. Priestley quotes something from Mr. Wollaston, and Mr. Locke, both Antinecessarians, and endeavours to shew that all the liberty the latter contended for, he is far from disclaiming, that is, "a liberty of suspending our determinations." (page 5th.) Only be so good then as to allow man the liberty of executing or suspending his determinations at his own pleasure, and it is all I ask. But here I am sensible, our thoughts or ideas of the meaning of these words are different, though we both acknowledge the truth of them, because Dr. Priestley says, (page 6th,) "That a determination to suspend a volition, is in fact, another volition; and therefore, according to Mr. Locke's own rule, must be determined by the most pressing uneasiness, as well as any other." The first part I admit to be true, but in opposition to the last part, here called Mr. Locke's rule, I maintain that man has it in his power to have twenty volitions, or willings, successively one after another; and if they all be within the ordinary power of man to effect, that he is at full liberty to execute or suspend, all, or any number of such volitions he pleases, if not interrupted by Almighty God, without being under any necessity whatever of being always determined by the most pressing uneasiness, though he may be so in general.

Can any man examine his own mind and intellectual powers, and then calmly and deliberately aver for a truth, that though he is determined by the most pressing uneasiness and desire, to eat victuals set before him,
when

when he is very hungry, yet that he cannot suspend such determination one minute, nor restrain such vehement desire for a very little time? Every one, I dare say, will allow man to have this power of thus refraining, and consequently, that he is not under any necessity of being always determined by the most pressing uneasiness; but that he can, when he pleases, suspend such determination by some power which he experiences to be in himself. But Dr. Priestley adds (page 6th) "If any man voluntarily suspends his determination, it is not without some motive or reason: As for instance, because he is apprehensive of some ill consequence arising from a hasty and inconsiderate resolution." Pray, what ill consequence can the hungry man, with good victuals before him (as in the above example) apprehend, if he immediately indulge himself and eat, any more than if we suppose him resolutely to suspend his determination, and to refrain eating for the space of a minute? It should be here observed, that I do not suppose him for the space of that minute, which he refrains, to be deliberating whether he should eat or not, for fear of any ill consequence whatever: As for instance, for fear the victuals should be poisoned, or any other, but merely to demonstrate that he is totally at liberty, and that he has it in his power to determine within himself, either to eat, or to refrain eating at pleasure, any motive, even the most pressing uneasiness notwithstanding. But it may be said, if he determines not to eat, there is some *motive* or reason which influences him, and the *motive* here, is, that he may shew his liberty or power to refrain: I will grant this motive, and as the doctrine of necessity, as maintained by Dr. Priestley, appears to be founded entirely on motives, which constantly and necessarily influence man's mind; I shall take that word into consideration by and by, and shew that no such necessity as he contends for, can necessarily result from any mechanical motives whatever. After Dr. Priestley has allowed to man the power of doing whatever he wills or pleases, "uncontrolled by any foreign principle or cause," (as in page 2d) he now, page 7th, in stating the same question, endeavours to shew what

what liberty, or rather power he supposes man not to have, " all the liberty, or rather power (says he) that " I say a man has not, is, that of doing several things " when all the previous circumstances (including the " state of his mind, and his views of things) are precisely the same. What I contend for, is, that with " the same state of mind, the same strength of any particular passion; for example, and the same views " of things, as any particular object appearing equally " desirable, he would always voluntarily make the same " choice, and come to the same determination: For " instance, if I make any particular choice to-day, I " should have done the same yesterday, and shall do the " same to-morrow, provided there be no change in the " state of my mind respecting the object of my choice. " In other words I maintain, that there is some fixed " law of nature respecting the will, as well as the other " powers of the mind, and every thing else in the constitution of nature; and consequently, that it is never determined without some real or apparent cause " foreign to itself, *i. e.* without some motive of choice, " or that motives influence us in some definite and invariable manner; so that every volition or choice is " constantly regulated and determined by what precedes " it; and this constant determination of mind, according to the motives presented to it, is all that I " mean by its necessary determination." I hope, the Doctor will excuse me, when I say I cannot believe both parts of his state of the question, because they manifestly contradict one another. I shall here set his own words in each part, in direct opposition on paper, and shall leave the reader to judge how far they are contradictory.

Page 2d.

I allow to man all the liberty or power that is possible in itself, and to which the ideas of man-

Page 7th and 8th.

I maintain that there is some fixed law of nature, respecting the will as well as the other powers of the kind

kind ever go, which is the power of doing whatever they will or please, with respect to the operations of their minds, and the motions of their bodies, *uncontrolled by any foreign principle or cause.*

mind, and every thing else in the constitution of nature, and consequently that it is *never determined without some real or apparent cause foreign to itself* that is without some motive of choice.

I really cannot understand how the "operations of men's minds and motions of their bodies can be uncontrolled by any foreign principle or cause;" and yet the mind never be determined without some real or apparent cause foreign to itself. Dr. Priestley says, "*uncontrolled* * *by any foreign cause*; then "*never determined without some foreign cause*:" But this last is explained by adding, that is without some motive of choice. Admitting then this motive of choice to be always the determining cause: it is either foreign to the mind, or it is not. If the motive or cause, which determines the mind be foreign to it, then the mind is certainly determined and controlled by some foreign cause, for it cannot act otherwise, by reason of some motive, cause, or thing foreign to itself, which controls and necessarily determines it. But if the determining cause or motive be not foreign to the mind, then it must be the mind itself, which determines according to its own pleasure and choice. In such a case, the mind is uncontrolled and undetermined by any foreign principle, cause, or motive. In either case, this motive of choice appears to me point blank, opposite to one of the Doctor's assertions above-mentioned. And as it is not op-

* To *controll*, from the French word *controller*, signifies to overlook, observe, or superintend. Yet it has also frequently another meaning, viz. to find fault with hinder or restrain; and, in this last sense, Dr. Priestley appears to have used it in his writings, as will appear plainly from this place; and also, from pages 35 and 49, as well as from page 113, &c. of his *Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit*. I therefore have admitted and used the word in the last sense throughout this work.

posite to the *latter*, it must be to the *first*; certainly then the mind is frequently determined by its own inherent power of choice, uncontrolled by any cause or motive of choice foreign to itself. Besides, Dr. Priestley maintains "that motives influence us in some definite and "invariable manner; so that every volition or choice, "is constantly regulated and determined by what precedes it;" that is, as he afterwards explains himself, "determined according to the motives presented to it." What the Doctor means by his *motives*, which he maintains to be capable of exerting such an amazing and extraordinary force and power, as *constantly*, *definitely*, and *invariably* to regulate and determine the volition (or choice as he explains the word) of every man's mind in every action and event, I cannot say. Neither does he say, whether his motives are bodies or no bodies, entities or non-entities; nor whether he means by the word motives, any things really existing in nature, or merely creatures of the imagination, or what seems most probable, whether it is not a word he uses without any certain meaning whatever; or, if it have a meaning, whether it is not synonymous with causes, as he seems to explain the word, (page 8th, lines 1, 2, 3.) If so, it is somewhat strange for so ingenious and learned a philosopher, to account for such prodigious effects, as the volitions of a man's mind, are in themselves, and are found by experience to be capable of producing, by saying, that they are constantly and invariably determined by motives or causes, without saying what these motives or causes are. If I was requested to account for any phenomenon in nature; for instance, eclipses of the sun or moon, it would be a small satisfaction to say, they arise from (or in Dr. Priestley's words, are constantly determined by) motives or causes, without assigning any cause whatever. If this method of philosophizing be sufficient, every thing in the universe may be easily accounted for, by mentioning the word cause. Thus, motives or causes, may be made to do every thing, far more than ever Whiston made his comets do; though out of one, he affirmed this earth to have been created; and that it was drowned by another at Noah's flood;

flood ; and has even threatened it with a more dreadful catastrophe still, from a third, viz. a general conflagration. But there is this difference, Mr. Whiston's comets are real bodies in nature, capable of great and astonishing effects, as secondary causes ; whereas, Dr. Priestley's motives are non-entities in nature, unknown and inexplicable what they are or how they act, and consequently harmless and not much to be feared.

Whatever the Doctor's motives be, if they are allowed to influence the mind of man in some definite and invariable manner, and necessarily to determine its volitions or choices, (which, by the way, I have before shewn in the case of a very hungry man, &c. they are not) I think he should define them, and explain what they are : As they influence the mind of man in a *necessary, definite, and invariable manner*, they must be the necessary, definite, and invariable cause of that effect, and consequently the cause must be equally definite and invariable, otherwise it is inadequate to the effect. From hence, I am induced to suppose it easy for Dr. Priestley to explain what those definite and invariable causes or motives are ; though I confess, I can form no probable conjecture about the matter.

After the question is stated as above, Dr. Priestley draws this conclusion, “ that how little so ever the
“ bulk of mankind may be apprehensive of it, or staggered by it, according to the established laws of nature, no event could have been otherwise than it has
“ been, is, or is to be.” And this conclusion he draws from the premises, where he makes some unknown powers, or occult qualities, which he calls motives, to be the necessary causes according to the established laws of nature, of every action and passion of every creature in the universe, whether past, present, or to come : On the contrary, I conclude from what I have said, that according to the laws of nature established by Almighty God ; many * past and present actions and events in the mental and intellectual world,

* I do not say all.

might have been very different from what they have been and are; and many † events to come are yet unknown and undetermined, by any motive or existence whatsoever, being wholly left to the choice and determination of intelligent and self-determining agents, created by God, and endowed with power to do many things, or to leave them undone at pleasure, without any necessary, definite, or invariably certain determining motive whatever. Whether of the above conclusions is according to the nature of things, let the reader judge from what we have each advanced in the following sections, in support of our different opinions.

† I do not say all.

SECTION II.

Of the Argument in favour of the Doctrine of Necessity, from the consideration of Cause and Effect.

WITH how little success Dr. Priestley endeavours to establish the doctrine of necessity from this consideration, I leave the reader to decide, after an impartial perusal of what we have both said. The first thing I shall observe, is, that the Doctor appears to be very right in saying, that “to establish the conclusion, “defined in the preceding section, nothing is necessary, “but to have it admitted, that throughout all nature “the same consequences should invariably result from “the same circumstances.” Admit but this one thing without proof, and the whole system of absolute necessity follows of course. But I can by no means admit what the Doctor wants admitted, as a firm groundwork to raise his superstructure upon, without very probable reasons that the same is true. If the truth of
what

what he requires be admitted, all the consequences enumerated in the 9th and beginning of the 10th pages, certainly follow. But the assumption, or first principle, I deny granting; and without this, all his reasoning falls to the ground. This method of argument, called by logicians *a petitio principii*, or a begging the question, will never do. Because, allow me but one sentence, such an one as I choose to be true; and I will undertake to prove any thing proposed to me (however absurd or ridiculous) to be demonstrably certain. Dr. Priestley, in his arguments from cause and effect, says, (page 11th) "a cause cannot be defined to be any thing, but *such previous circumstances as are constantly followed by a certain effect.*" I beg the Doctor's pardon for presuming to say, a cause may, and can be defined thus, *that power from which any thing proceeds, or by which any thing is done.* I really think this to be the clearer definition. I shall, however, accept Dr. Priestley's definition, as it is quite sufficient for me to know what he means by the term. "The constancy of the result (says he, page 11th) making us conclude that there must be a sufficient reason in the nature of things, why it should be produced in these circumstances, so that, in all cases, if the result be different, either the circumstances must have been different, or there were no circumstances whatever corresponding to the difference in the result; and, consequently, the effect was without any cause at all." As Dr. Priestley defined cause by *previous circumstances*, &c. the word cause may be substituted for previous circumstances, &c. His assertion, then is, that in all cases if the result be different, either the cause must have been different, or there was no cause whatever corresponding to the difference in the result; and, consequently, the effect was without any cause at all. I allow this to be true reasoning in all cases, where corporeal and mechanical operations are considered as absolutely uninterrupted and uninfluenced, by immaterial, self-determining, and intelligent agents: But, where they interfere, or are concerned, I can by no means allow it. To set this matter in a clear and convincing

light, I will bring one instance out of the Bible, (because I know Dr. Priestley regards the contents of that book as certainly true) where, in one case, the cause was the same, and the result different; and yet, there is the very same cause, and no effect without a cause. The river Jordan, like other rivers, descended, or ran downward towards the sea, which descent was according to the established laws of nature. Now, by the established laws of nature, I doubt not but Dr. Priestley will allow the will of God only to be signified. The effect, or result of this cause (the will of God) was, that the waters moved towards the sea. But we read in the 3d chapter of Joshua, verses 15, 16. "As they that bare the ark were come into Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the waters, that the waters which came down from above, stood and rose up, upon an heap." The result, or effect, was here very different from what it was before, when the river ran downward. Yet, both originated from the same cause, the will of Almighty God, in the first case, impressing such a force upon the water as to overcome the natural inactivity thereof, and thereby putting it in motion, when at rest; and in the latter case, also, by overcoming the natural inactivity of water, and thereby stopping its motion once begun, or by changing its present state of motion to that of rest.

But it may be urged, previous circumstances were not the same, as the will of God was different in working the two effects. To which I answer the only difference was in the will of God a self-determining free agent, and not in the material world; and I hope, Dr. Priestley never thought of chaining down the Supreme Being by necessity, so as to be unable to operate at all, unless from necessarily, constantly, and invariably determining motives, and not according to his own pleasure and self-determination. But, it may be further urged, that Almighty God never acts without good and reasonable motives. I answer true. His actions are always good, just, and perfect, as becomes a most good, just, and perfect being; yet, out of numberless actions,
equally

equally good, just, and perfect, he does which he pleases, and leaves the rest undone, without any cause or motive but his own pleasure and power of self-determination. If he did not thus, but was obliged to act only from some constantly and determining motives, exclusive of his own pleasure and power of self-determination, there never could any thing have been created, or any thing have existed besides himself: Because, before any thing was created, and nothing existed but God, there could be no other motives, circumstances, or views of things *, but what were in his own mind, to induce or influence him to create so many millions of mental or intellectual, and material or corporeal beings, as he has created; or to do any other action. Since then God must have this liberty or power of self-determination in himself, as he is Almighty, he certainly could create the mind of man with the same liberty or power of self-determination in many cases, even where all circumstances are the same, by imparting to him a power, in some degree similar to his own, instanced above, in the case of the waters of Jordan, without being tied down by necessity, or any other imaginary being, to be influenced so, as from the same motive or cause to have always and invariably the same effect, or otherwise, that the effect should be without any cause at all. And if God, who is almighty, could thus create man's mind after his own likeness; it appears as if he had done so, because by our own consciousness and daily experience, as in many instances, so particularly in the case mentioned above, of an hungry man with good victuals before him, we may be assured that man has an inherent power of self-determination in himself of eating immediately, or refraining for some time without any necessity whatever irresistibly impelling him. So far is what Dr. Priestley says from being true, viz. that " these maxims are universal, being equally applicable " to all things that belong to the constitution of nature, " corporeal, or mental." But the Doctor endeavours to illustrate the matter by an example, (page 11th)

* There was then no other being or existence in the universe.

thus, " If (says he) I take a pair of scales loaded with
 " equal weights, they both remain in equilibrio. By
 " throwing an additional weight into one of the scales,
 " I make a change in the circumstances, which is im-
 " mediately followed by a new situation, viz. a depres-
 " sion of the one, and an elevation of the opposite
 " scale. And having observed the same effect before, I
 " was able to foretel, that this depression of the one
 " scale, and elevation of the other, would be the cer-
 " tain consequence. It could not be otherwise, whilst
 " the same laws of nature were preserved. In order
 " to its being possible for it to have been otherwise, the
 " laws of nature must have been so framed, as that up-
 " on throwing in the additional weight, the scale
 " might, or might not have been depressed, or it might
 " have been depressed without any additional weight
 " at all. But, in this case, there would have been an
 " effect without a cause, there having been no change
 " of circumstances previous to the change of situation,
 " viz. the depression of the scale. In fact, this is the
 " only reason why we say that such an effect would
 " have been produced without a cause."

The doctrine of the scales with equal weights, and of one being depressed by putting in an additional weight, whilst the other is elevated, is very true, as Dr. Priestley says, whilst the same laws of nature are preserved; that is, whilst the will of God is so. But, let us suppose with him, that the laws of nature had been so formed, as that upon throwing in the additional weight, the scale might, or might not have been depressed, or it might have been depressed without any additional weight at all. What then? Dr. Priestley says, in this case, there would have been an effect without a cause. I say, there would have been the same cause, but a different effect. To know who is right, let the cause be considered in the former case, where an additional weight is thrown into one scale, when in equilibrio, and then one scale is depressed, and the other elevated. The cause is the laws of nature, or in other words, the will of God, a self-determining intelligent agent or being. Dr. Priestley says, it could not be otherwise, whilst

whilst the same laws of nature were preserved, and that because of which, it could not be otherwise; i. e. the laws of nature must be the cause why it was so. In the second case, the supposition is, that if an additional weight was thrown into the scale in equilibrio, it might, or might not have been depressed. What was the cause? The very same as before, viz. the laws of nature. Dr. Priestley himself, supposes the laws of nature to have been changed, and to have been so framed as to have the above consequences. The consequences, in both cases, arise from the same cause, the laws of nature, or will of God; yet, in the two cases put, the laws are supposed to be differently framed. Certainly then the consequences must be different. In the first case, one scale is depressed by throwing in an additional weight. The cause generally assigned is gravity or the attraction of the earth, or in Dr. Priestley's words, the laws of nature, all which are only words invented in this case to express an effect, which we find by experience, generally follows upon one body or mass of matter approaching another. But they all are in reality non-entities, or creatures of the imagination, whilst the real cause must be, as before observed, something really existing and present, and not a mere imaginary term exhibited as a real cause, in order to conceal our ignorance. What is gravity or attraction? No man knows. That material bodies when near other material bodies, mutually attract each other, is very true; but can any man say how, or why? It is clear, that it is not by any inherent power in matter itself, because the action of attraction between two bodies, is frequently exerted at a great distance from the bodies themselves. Yet no one thing can act where it is not; or, as Sir Isaac Newton says, "*Virtus sine substantia non esse potest*;" no body, however large, can exert any power where it is not itself, or beyond its own terminating surface; or, in other words, no one thing can act where it cannot reach. If it could, one might assign any thing whatsoever for the cause of any effect whatever, however distant, or however unconcerned. Hence,

then the earth at a distance *, cannot by any inherent power in it, or bestowed upon it, attract the scale and weight thus destroying the equilibrium. Neither can any thing whatever exert this power, and overcome the innate or natural inactivity of the matter, or weight in the scale, so as to move it, unless that same thing actually exist, be present, and exert such a force or power upon it, as to produce the effect. This excludes every thing visible to man, as the cause of the scale descending, as well as every word or term, which is no real entity, but a mere creature of the mind, whether it be called † impulse, attraction, gravitation, laws of nature, or any such like.

The cause then must be some intelligent, invisible, and also some present agent; and I may also add some self-de-

* But it may be objected here, that the force of gravity is caused by some fluid or other matter impelling the falling body. To which I answer, that the fluid or other matter, supposed to be impelling and assigned as the cause of gravity, must be impelled by some other matter, and that by some other matter; and so on, till at last we must come to some self-moving being, the source of all motion; the power of which, must overcome the natural inactivity, or resistance of the matter, and that with such a degree of force and velocity, as to be able to put all the other matter in motion which is moved thereby; and which at last, must through several mediums, act upon the weight in the scale, to make it descend. Since all the component particles of matter, however fluid, or however rarified, retain their natural property of inactivity and resistance, and that in proportion to their quantity; consequently, if once at rest, they must remain so without the impulse of some extraneous force impressed, as they are not naturally self-moving, or able to move themselves.

† Hence we may see the fallacy of Dr. Priestley's doctrine, which makes the principal properties of matter to be attraction and repulsion, powers which act at a distance from the matter itself. See his Disquisitions, &c. If Dr. Priestley can explain how any thing can act where it is not, or beyond its own terminating surface, or will say that ~~they are the principal properties of matter; but that~~ he can have any consistent conception of the same, I will yield the argument. The intrinsic and natural property, which I affirm to be in matter, viz. inertness, or a power of resistance, may be easily conceived, and is daily experienced, but never exerted where the body is not, as attraction and repulsion must be allowed to be, by every one if they be considered as real properties of matter, and not effected by some other unknown, invisible, and self-determining agent or agents.

ter-

termining agent, not acting invariably and necessarily, because we actually find the laws of nature in gravity or attraction, to have been frequently suspended and altered; particularly in the Red Sea dividing for the children of Israel to pass through. "The waters becoming a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left*." Also in the waters of Jordan dividing, as mentioned above. And what is most to the purpose, † the ax head which fell into the water and sunk, after some time arose to the top and did swim, though made of iron. Many more instances of the suspension or alteration of the general laws of gravity or attraction might be brought, but these are sufficient. When it pleased God to make iron swim, it did so, and if it was his will, it would always do so: Why then can he not cause a weight in a scale to ascend, descend, or equiponderate according to his pleasure? So far from gravity being a law of nature, if we consider well what has been observed before, it will appear to be a supernatural influence or power, generally exerted by some invisible unknown agent, to overcome the natural inactivity of matter, which is its fundamental law and real property. If this power, thus exerted, was totally suspended, all matter would from thenceforward continue in its present situation, whether of motion or rest, without any possibility of change. In such a case, what could there be to cause any change whatever? All changes in matter must arise from what we call attraction, or impulse; neither of which can have any original cause, except some power or force exerted by some self-moving, self-determining agent, acting at pleasure. Because we find such force or power not necessarily and invariably exerted, but sometimes altered and suspended by some self-determining existence, as above-mentioned. Hence it appears that all corporeal things do not act invariably and necessarily, much less then do mental and intelligent beings. For we may observe, that the effect, even in the material world, does not always invariably and necessarily depend upon the cause, if by that cause (with Dr. Priestley) we mean the laws of nature only, though it always does

* Exodus xiv. 22.

† 2 Kings vi. 5.

does depend upon the cause, if we mean the real original cause, viz. a self-moving, self-determining agent, able to work many effects at pleasure, uncontrolled by necessity or any foreign power whatever. Hence appears the reason why we are * “ not able to determine “ a priori, how man (a self-determining agent) will act “ in any particular case.” It is for the same reason that we † “ cannot tell which way the wind will blow “ to-morrow,” viz. because the laws of gravity, or the general and mechanical laws of motion in the material world, are owing to a continual exertion of power by Almighty God ; or, at least, some immaterial, self-determining agent, deputed by him for that purpose. Dr. Priestley says, page 13th, “ a particular determination of mind could not have been otherwise than “ it was, if the laws of nature, respecting the mind, “ be such as that the same determination shall constantly follow the same state of mind, and the same “ views of things.” To which I answer, very true, admitting the laws of nature, respecting the mind, to be always as he states the case ; but it appears above, that the laws of nature, even in the material world, do not constantly and invariably influence all things, even when in the same state, because self-determining and intelligent agents often interfere and interrupt them, much less, then, can we admit the case to be as stated in the mental and intellectual world.

But Dr. Priestley adds (pages 13, 14). “ It could “ not be possible for any determination to have been “ otherwise than it has been, is, or is to be, unless “ the laws of nature had been such, as that, though “ both the state of mind, and the views of things “ were the same, the determination might, or might “ not have taken place. But in this case, the determination must have been an effect without a cause, because in this case, as in that of the balance, there “ would have been a change of situation without “ any previous change of circumstances, and there can-

* Dr. Priestley, page 13.

† Ibid.

“ not

“ not be any other definition of an effect without a cause.” Very true, again. The determinations of the mind would certainly have been constant, invariable, and certain if God had absolutely so made the laws of nature ; but the laws (or rather constitution of nature) are not so, but the contrary. They are such, that though both the state of mind and the views of things are the same, yet the determination, in many instances, may, or may not take place, and this according to the power of self-determination implanted in the mind of man by the Almighty God of Nature, by which it is enabled in many cases to choose or refuse, to act or suspend the action, without any certain necessary determining motive whatever, as appears from the case of the hungry man, before introduced. In that example, the state of mind, is an uneasy sensation arising from hunger, and the views of things, are plenty of good victuals before him, and whatsoever other views you please to add : Yet no man can certainly foretell what the man in such a situation will do the next minute. Nay, so far is he from being certainly and necessarily influenced, that to eat or not to eat, is wholly in his own power, viz. the power of self-determination in his mind : Yet there is no effect without a cause. The cause in both cases (whether he eats or does not eat) is the law or constitution of nature, or a power of self-determination given by Almighty God to man’s mind, of acting or not acting in many cases entirely at his pleasure.

Dr. Priestley’s mistake seems to originate from this. He argues, because (as is very true) there can be no effect without a cause, therefore the mind of man cannot act without some motive or cause, which always constantly and invariably determines its choice in every thing it does. Whereas the matter stands thus ; The mind of man is frequently induced and determined in all its actions by some motive or cause foreign to itself, but yet it is not always constantly and invariably so, but has a power of self determination, which enables it in many cases to resist the most pleasing inducement, and the most alluring motive ; so that it may comply with the motive,
or

or not, equally at pleasure. And yet if it do not comply with the inducement or alluring motive, there is also a cause of this effect of non-compliance, viz. that power of choosing or refusing, of executing or suspending its own determinations, which Almighty God has given it. Certainly, Almighty God has such a power or liberty within himself, because he has frequently exerted such a power in suspending what we call the general laws of nature, even in the material world, as instanced above. And he also as Almighty, must have such power or liberty within himself, that he might or might not act several things which he does, even in the same state, and with the same views of things. Notwithstanding this, all his works originate from him as a cause, and consequently are not uncaused. Either God has such a power and liberty, or he has not. If he has such a power, then the argument of Dr. Priestley must be inconclusive, which is founded upon the impossibility of having a change of situation (or a difference of things) without any previous change "of circumstances." (Page 14). Unless by previous change of circumstances be meant a change in the supreme mind, arising merely from his own inherent power of self-determination, which would be granting the very thing I contend for.

But if on the contrary, God has no such power, then he is equally tied down by the influence of motives, to a constant and invariable determination and necessary action, as man is, and under the very same necessity for every action, operation, and effect, which has been done, is done, or is to be done by him. This doctrine is certainly blasphemous, because it makes *fate*, or *necessity*, or *motives*, or *something*, superior to God himself, and constantly, invariably, and necessarily determining him to all he does. This, think, will not be allowed by any one. Since, therefore, one of the two must be true, such a liberty and power of self-determination must at least exist in God, otherwise he is so far from being almighty, that on the contrary, he himself must be under the necessary guidance, direction and influence of (pardon the expression) *Almighty necessity*.
Since

Since then such a power and liberty belongs to Almighty God in an infinite measure, it cannot be inconsistent to suppose, that he being Almighty was at least able to create a creature with some measure of the same liberty and power of self determination, so as to act or not act in many things, uncontrolled by any thing but the creator, and even that controll exerted or suspended by him at pleasure. I say, this must be at least possible to omnipotence, because such a creature is not so contradictory and inconsistent, but even our limited capacities, can apprehend such a one, and form a consistent idea thereof. If we could not have proper conceptions of a creature endowed with such a liberty and power; so great a number of men, could never have been able to have believed or even supposed such an one, as we find there are who believe this. Hence we may see how false that assertion of Dr. Priestley's must be, (page 15) that this is, "a thing impossible even to *divine power*, because impossible to power *abstractedly considered*." That we have such a liberty and power over our own consciousness, our daily practise and experience sufficiently testify. To demonstrate the truth of this, Dr. Priestley shall put me into any state he can or pleases (a state of pain excepted) and give me what views of things he pleases, and then tell me what I will do the next minute, for twenty times together; yet in spite of all his motives, state of mind, views, or any thing else, I will every time do, not exactly what he says, but something different. Thus Dr. Priestley's conclusion falls to the ground, that if man had such a power as I contend for, there would be an effect without a cause. The issue of the whole dispute seems to be here, whether Almighty God could communicate such a power to his creature man, or he could not; that an Almighty God could do it, I think no reasonable man can deny; and that he has done it, I have not the least doubt, because I am fully convinced of the same from my own consciousness and my daily experience of such a power. But Dr. Priestley says, (page 18) "The only reason that we can have to believe in any cause, and that it acts necessarily, is that
" it

" it acts certainly or invariably. If my mind be as
 " constantly determined by the influence of motives, as
 " a stone is determined to fall to the ground by the in-
 " fluence of gravity, I am constrained to conclude, that
 " the cause in one case, acts as necessarily as that in
 " the other. For there must be an equally sufficient
 " reason for equally constant and certain effects."
 Admitting the assumption to be true, the conclusion is
 so. But here again Dr. Priestley takes something for
 granted, which he has not proved, and which I deny.
 " If my mind be as constantly determined, &c." True.
 But my mind is not so constantly determined by the in-
 fluence of motives, as a stone is determined by the in-
 fluence of gravity; and yet neither of them are constantly
 so determined. The mind of man is in many cases at
 full liberty in itself, and has full power to act in op-
 position to any motives whatever; whereas a stone has
 no such liberty or power in itself to resist what we call
 gravity, but is uninfluenced by it only, when it pleases
 God to suspend gravity, or rather his own will and
 power in causing it to fall, which we find he has fre-
 quently suspended, as mentioned above; and he can
 equally restrain the liberty of man's mind, if he pleases.
 It follows then, that neither motives in the case of
 man's mind, nor gravity in that of a stone falling, do
 constantly, invariably and necessarily cause a certain
 effect without any exception. And if motives and gra-
 vity do ever cease to act, though but in one instance,
 they do not act constantly and necessarily; yet I allow
 they do generally act so, and would always whilst the
 same power is exerted, which we call the present laws
 of nature; provided some free and self determining
 power* did not interfere or interrupt their general in-
 fluence. This I hope will be deemed a sufficient an-
 swer to the second section, or the argument for necessity
 drawn from the consideration of cause and effect.

* Either man or some other free agent.

SECTION III.

Of the Argument for Necessity from the Divine Prescience.

IN this Section, Dr. Priestley, with his usual acuteness and strength of reasoning, attempts to prove and clearly demonstrates the truth of the doctrine of necessity from one principle, viz. the universal prescience of God. But here, as usual, he begs the question, taking for granted, what he has not proved, and what I again deny. I am very sensible, that if it be admitted, that God certainly foreknows every action and passion of every man, that is yet to come, there needs no other argument whatever, to support an absolute and uncontrollable necessity; because if certainly foreknown, they must all inevitably come to pass. If there was the least chance or probability of any event not coming to pass, it could not be certainly foreknown, for chance and probability admit not of certainty. I therefore would allow to Dr. Priestley every consequence he has drawn (in pages 19th, 20th, and the former part of the 21st.) from God's universal prescience, if I was convinced of that. In such a case I would be as much a necessarian as Dr. Priestley himself. I shall therefore here produce my reasons, why we have no right to believe that God certainly foreknows every thing, in opposition to what Dr. Priestley asserts. He says, (page 21st) "If man be possessed of a proper power of self determination, the Deity himself cannot controll it; (as far as he interferes, it is no self-determination of the man) and if he does not controll it, he cannot foresee it." This appears to me very inconsistent reasoning. If man (at all times under the controll of his maker, if he pleases) be possessed of a proper power of self-determination, God cannot controll it. He surely can. An Almighty God can undoubtedly controll and restrain man's power of self-determination; but because God can always and constantly do this, if he pleases, is it

fair reasoning to conclude, that he always and constantly will so do? Because he can do so, is he under a necessity of doing it? If so, man is not under the controll of God, but of necessity. I may with as much propriety assert, that if man be possessed of a power to wash his own hands, the Deity himself cannot controll it, as Dr. Priestley can assert what he does. If God cannot controll one power, which man is possessed of; why can he controll another? In true reasoning, we never should limit Almighty power by asserting it unable to effect any thing, unless it be what implies a contradiction in its own nature. But the Doctor adds, "If he (God) does not controll it, he cannot foresee it. Equally inconsistent! Another limitation of Almighty power! God did not controll* the making of the world, could he then not foresee it? This is strangely limiting God's foresight indeed, much more than I could suppose. The argument here may be reduced to this. Either God does controll every thing whatever, or he does not. If he does, then things come to pass in spite of his controll. If he does not controll all or any of them, then according to Dr. Priestley, he cannot foresee all or any of them, and consequently in such a case all things come to pass, without a possibility of God's foreseeing them, because he does not controll them. In opposition to all this, I maintain what I believe to be true, viz. that Almighty God can, if he pleases, foreknow and foresee every thing that is yet to come, and can necessarily influence every creature visible or invisible, corporeal or mental, to act as he pleases in every thing, and at all times, according to what he determines so to foreknow. Yet, we must not argue, *a posse ad esse*, or because *the thing is possible, that it is so in fact*. On the contrary, it is equally possible to an unlimited and Almighty power to create a set of creatures with liberty and power of self-determination, to choose or refuse, to act or not to act in many things at pleasure, without that choice or refusal, that action or non-action, being foreknown by any being whatever; and also

* See the note upon controll in page 9.

without being necessitated by any certain definite motives whatever, to a certain definite, or certainly fore-known mode of action, thus creating them in his own likeness, with full liberty, in many cases, to act as they please. I suppose no man will deny that God could make such creatures, if he allows him to be Almighty; since this implies no contradiction, because any man of a tolerable capacity can form a notion of such a creature in his own mind. The question is, whether men are or are not creatures endowed with this liberty and power of self-determination? Our consciousness, our daily experience and constant practice in life, all conspire to inform us that we are such creatures. If then the revelation of Almighty God contained in the scriptures confirms the same, we can have no doubt remaining. Let us then examine it with this view. Dr. Priestley says, (page 21) "The whole history of revelation shews, that every determination of the mind of man is certainly foreknown by the Divine Being." I confess I can find no such expression, nor any thing equivalent to the same. One would from hence be induced to think, that Dr. Priestley's Bible and mine are not the same. The Doctor finds this shewn in the whole history of revelation, and I cannot find it at all. However, when the matter comes out, so far from every determination of the mind of man being foreknown, it proves only to be some that are so: One instance of which he gives in the death of our Saviour. He says, "This event was certainly foreseen and intended, for it most particularly entered into the plan of Divine Providence." This I allow (with many more particular instances in scripture) to have been foretold, predetermined and certainly foreseen after Adam's transgression. But from one particular instance, or even a number of particulars, we cannot infer a general and never failing conclusion, or an absolute certainty that it is and always will be so. One would really suppose, by Dr. Priestley's expression, *it most particularly entered into the plan of Divine Providence*, that he was very sensible several things did not enter the plan in such a very particular manner; or in other words, that some things were more eventual, and

frequently in the power of some other self-determining being to effect, without a most particular interference of Divine Providence. If every thing entered into the plan of Divine Providence equally, how could this remarkable instance of our Saviour's death do so *most particularly*? To proceed. All the places in which God's foreknowledge is mentioned in the New Testament, that I know, are Acts ii. 23. Romans viii. 29. 1 Peter i. 2. and again, 1 Peter i. 20. For though in this last place it stands in our translation fore-ordained; yet in the original it is προεγνωσμενα, which ought to be translated foreknown, as it comes from the same word προγνωσκω, as Προγνωσκει does, which in Acts, ii. 23. is translated foreknowledge. But in none of these places, is God's foreknowledge said to extend to every action and passion of every man. They only represent some particular thing there related or spoken of to be foreknown by God. I remember no assertion of God's general or universal foreknowledge in all the scriptures. In the first mentioned text, Acts, ii. 23. "Him being delivered by the determined counsel
 " and foreknowledge of God ye have taken, and by
 " wicked hands have crucified and slain." Here is the very instance which Dr. Priestley produced to prove God's absolute foreknowledge, viz. our Saviour's death. That God sent his son into the world, for this very purpose, is plain from several parts of scripture, and that he foreknew the nature of his death, is equally plain, because he had before foretold it by the mouth of his holy prophets, and therefore it was his determinate counsel, or resolved intention. But because he foreknew this, can we fairly infer that he must and does foreknow every action and passion of every man? If an absolute and general foreknowledge could be deduced from a particular thing being foreknown and foretold, then the prophets must have absolutely foreknown all things; because they foreknew and foretold our Saviour's death, and other particular things with certainty. In the second text, (Romans viii. 29). "For whom
 " he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, &c."

If

If one could infer from this, an absolute general prescience or foreknowledge in God; then it would be very plain that he must equally foreknow all, and the consequence would be that all would be equally predestinated. He predestinated *all whom he did foreknow*. A still further consequence evidently follows in the next verse, viz. that all would be equally *called, justified, and glorified*. For he glorified *all that he justified*, and justified *all that he called*, and called *all that he predestinated*, and predestinated *all that he did foreknow*. If then God foreknows all, he glorifies all; which is, I think, what no person will allow, and yet it is a plain consequence from this interpretation. Hence, no general foreknowledge can possibly be proved from this text but the contrary. To know in scripture language frequently signifies to have an esteem for, to approve or favour. And therefore whom he did foreknow, may signify those whom he before or already approved of, upon the account of what they had done, those he did predestinate or determine to be conformed to the image of his son, by the assistance of his holy spirit; or it may signify that he foreknew some particular persons, whom in consequence of such foreknowledge he was determined to predestinate and glorify, without foreknowing and predestinating any one to irresistible destruction. The next text is (1 Peter i. 2) "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God." The word elect is used in Isaiah lxxv. 9. and other places of the Old Testament, to signify the Jews, as being God's chosen and peculiar people separated from other nations, and therefore the Apostles might properly and did frequently apply it to Christians as being God's elect separated to himself, a peculiar people zealous of good works. The word *elect* might in this sense be more properly applied to Christians than to Jews. If so, the meaning is elect (or Christians) according to the foreknowledge of God, that is, according to what God did foreknow, and did foretell by his Prophets of old, concerning his son coming into the world, to call sinners to repentance. So, like Acts ii. 23. it only proves that God did foreknow the sending of his son into the world, and that there would

be a set of men called Christians, but in consequence it proves nothing at all like an absolute universal foreknowledge. The same holds good of 1. Peter i. 20. "Who verily was foreknown before the foundation of the world." This like the first and third texts before mentioned, plainly refers to Christ, who was certainly foreknown to God and predetermined to come into the world. Hence we see, that three of the texts out of the four, wherein foreknowledge is mentioned, have a plain reference to the incarnation and death of Christ, the very example which Dr. Priestley has brought to prove the divine universal prescience. I have also heard Acts xv. 18. quoted to prove the absolute and general foreknowledge of God "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." But as it is only *known* and not *foreknown*, in the original *γνωσα* and not *προγνωσα*, it is plain, a general foreknowledge cannot be proved from hence. But it may be objected here, that the words *απ αινως*, are not connected with the words *τα εργα αυτου*, in the original, but with *γνωσα*, and therefore this text should be translated. "Known unto God from the beginning or from everlasting are all his works." Supposing this, I cannot see much difference. The signification appears still to be the same, that God's works are all known to him from everlasting, but this does not signify or imply that they are all now known, which he will do to everlasting. And even if this was said, it only implies that God foreknows all his own works, and not such works of free and self-determining agents, as he interferes not at all with, any further than by creating the agents, whilst he intermeddles not with their works. If God had necessarily and absolutely foreknown every future action and event without any exception, I think this would very probably have been as clearly revealed, as his knowledge of all things past and present is, even the very thoughts long before they are brought forth into action. Had the words been, "Known unto God are all his works to the end of the world," it would have proved an absolute

folute universal foreknowlege. But it is only "known
 " unto God are all his works from the beginning of the
 " world." This only can signify *an ex post facto*
 knowledge, or a knowledge of works done from the
 beginning of the world. This knowledge I readily ad-
 mit. Infinite wisdom and knowledge of all things
 past and present, are certainly attributes of the Deity;
 but we cannot hence safely infer that he must necessarily
 foreknow every individual action of those creatures, on
 whom at creation, he has been pleased to bestow a power
 of free agency and self determination. This would de-
 grade us from being reasonable creatures, and reduce us
 to mere machines under the certain and absolute com-
 pulsion of some foreign principle or existence, without
 any more liberty than a stone has in itself not to fall, or
 water not to descend by the influence of gravity, as Dr.
 Priestley contends we are (pages 3d and 18th).^{*} We may
 observe from what has been said, that they are all par-
 ticular instances, which God is said to foreknow in
 scripture, and which as foreknown must unavoidably
 come to pass; and yet as Dr. Priestley says, (page 22)
 "generally they were brought about by causes perfectly
 " natural."

* A very learned, worthy, and dignified Divine, for whom I
 have a very great respect, since I wrote the above, pointed out to
 me these texts as objections to what I have here advanced, viz.
 Isaiah xli. 22, xliv. 78, xlv. 21, xlv. 10, and xlviii. 3. In
 answer to which, I observe, that it will appear to any one who
 consults these places, that they only tend to shew the superiority
 of Almighty God over idols, and particularly that he can fore-
 tel things which shall certainly come to pass, which is a thing
 beyond what any other Being can do; because no other Being is
 Almighty, and consequently able to bring to pass any thing fore-
 told by it. If any other being should foretel any future thing,
 and also determine to bring it to pass, it might be interrupted by
 the interference of the Lord God Almighty, and consequently
 may be unable to effect what it has foretold. But it is not said
 or implied in any of them, that God's foreknowledge is universal, or
 that he absolutely foreknows all future events. The same Gentle-
 man, also writes to me, "if you limit God's fore knowledge, you
 " limit his providence too, for no one can provide against what
 " he cannot foresee." To this I answer, that I always admit
 God to be able (as being Almighty) to foresee every future
 action

“natural.” That Almighty God can absolutely fore-know all actions and events however numerous and minute, that ever shall in future be done or come to pass, I deny not; because he can fore-ordain every action and event that shall come to pass. But suppose, as I believe the truth is, that God created man a free agent, and gave him a self-determining power to act or not to act, in many things at pleasure. In this case God has not fore-ordained all actions and events, but frequently leaves man to choose and act at pleasure; and consequently does not certainly, and absolutely foreknow, what man, a free agent, will in all cases do. Notwithstanding this, I admit, that as God’s prudence and knowledge so very far exceeds ours, his fore-knowledge of these uncertain actions and events where free agents are concerned, is founded on a very great degree of probability, much more than ours can possibly be, as he knows so much more of the nature and manner, source and original of man’s determinations and consequent actions, than we can possibly do. A prudent discerning man can frequently give very shrewd and probable conjectures as to what a man or set of men in such or such a situation will do, reasoning from the nature and general disposition of men, together with what a man or set of men has or have done in a like situation and circumstances. Thus in the year 1764, I foretold that the inhabitants of English America, would at some future period of time rebel against Great-Britain, and would attempt to throw off what they would call an oppressive foreign yoke; though I then observed that probably the same would not happen this century. Now, although I was mistaken in point of time, yet I foresaw

action and event, if he pleases, and that he actually does so when he pleases, and therefore can provide for or against every thing as he pleases. I only maintain, that God can (when he pleases) and frequently does leave man a free agent in many things to act at pleasure, without any particular interference, and even without fore-knowing absolutely what he will do, although he certainly can interfere and fore-know what such a free agent will do whenever he pleases, as observed before.

and

and foretold that it would happen. Notwithstanding this, my fore-sight and fore-knowledge were not absolutely certain, but only very probable. I might consequently have been mistaken concerning the event, as well as I was concerning the time. The probability of this happening, appeared hence, that a number of men at so great a distance from the seat of Government, confined in their trade to the mother country alone, and labouring under burdens, which it was clear, they would by and by call hardships and oppressions, together with a desire (which is natural to man) of being independent, and having the sovereign power amongst themselves, and not at a distance, would all conspire to induce them to rise in rebellion. I can now also foresee, that at some future time Spanish and Portugueze America will do the same, and America from one end to the other will become one great independent empire. Yet all this, is only probability arising from probable circumstances, so that I may be mistaken. If then, man can thus reason, so as with some probability to foretel such events as depend upon numbers of self-determining beings; with how much a greater degree of probability does Almighty God fore-know such events? Yet he does not fore-know them with absolute certainty, unless in such cases, as where (provided the man or set of men do not choose by their own wills and self-determining powers to do as fore-known and fore-told) God will interfere by his providence, so far as to influence the will and mind of every man in every action relating thereto in an irresistible manner, thus making them absolute necessarians. If he did not thus act, in such cases, he could not certainly and absolutely fore-know and foretel such events, because if he did not so provide, that men by their self determining powers neither could nor should do otherwise than what he certainly fore-knew and fore-told, he might be mistaken in the event, and if this was barely possible, then it was not fore-known with absolute certainty as before observed.

Absolute, unlimited, and certain fore-knowledge can never permit a man to act but in one certain line of conduct, without the least possible deviation, or without any possibility

possibility of doing otherwise than he does. It appears from Exodus xiii. 17, God did not at that time certainly foreknow what the Israelites would do. "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near, for God said, lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt." This plainly shews, that the people had full liberty and full power of determining to return or not return to Egypt, and that God did not certainly and absolutely fore-know, whether they would do so or no, if they found inconveniences in their journey. God therefore uses this caution to induce them not to return: he led them with a pillar of fire by the most easy and convenient, though not by the nearest way, lest when they saw war, they should be afraid, *repent and return to Egypt*. Now had he irresistibly influenced their minds, or necessitated them to go, or had he certainly fore-known they would go, why did he use this precaution, "lest they should repent and return," if he knew they could not possibly return, nor do otherwise than they were necessitated to do? David enquiring of God, says, * "Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? Will Saul come down as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the Lord said, he will come down. Then said David, will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, they will deliver thee up." Notwithstanding this, we find Saul neither went down, nor did the men of Keilah deliver David and his men up. We must not think that † "God is a man that he should lye." How then can this be reconciled? It may be done thus: The purport of the question seems to be this: Does Saul now will to come down to me at Keilah? And do the men of Keilah now will to deliver me up? That is, are their wills, desires, and intentions such now at this present? This was a proper question put by David to God, who knows the most secret

* 1 Sam. xxiii. 11, 12. † Num. xxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 29.

thoughts, intentions, wills, and desires of men, for he "sees the reins and the heart."* But it does not follow that he always pleases to fore-know how they may change their present wills and intentions, when he leaves them at liberty so to do. Hence, though God positively said, that Saul will come down, and the men of Keilah will deliver thee up, that is, their wills and intentions are now such; yet afterwards David arose and left Keilah, and Saul did not come down, neither did the men of Keilah deliver him up. They all changed their wills and intentions according to the power of self-determination God had given them, who seems neither to have fore-ordained nor to have certainly fore-known what they would in future do in this case. If God did then certainly fore-know that David would leave Keilah, and that Saul in consequence would not come down, why did he not give such an answer? If God meant directly as the answer appears in the common acceptance to imply, the consequence is plain, that God was mistaken, and did not certainly fore-know what they would do, but only that there was a very great degree of probability that it would come to pass as he answered, which however it did not.

If we examine all the scriptures we shall find that so far from every determination of man's mind being certainly foreknown, and consequently under a necessity of coming to pass, that full power of self determination is implied to be in man, in almost every page; we find the whole tendency of the New Testament, both Gospels and Epistles, is to persuade men to turn from their wickedness and live, or to come unto Christ, that they may have life. They are called upon to believe, to repent, to be baptized, to watch, to pray, to give diligence, to strive, to contend earnestly, with innumerable other expressions, which all plainly signify man to have a power of self-determination, and free agency within himself, and not to be a mere machine wrought upon mechanically and irresistibly by some foreign impulse or necessity. The preaching and writings of our

Saviour and his Apostles, as well as all other writings and exhortations of the same kind are all vain and fruitless, upon any other plan. According to Dr. Priestley, no man could be otherwise than he has been, is, or is to be. Because says he, (page 13,) "it is not possible for any determination to have been otherwise than it has been, is, or is to be," *i. e.* according to his system. Consequently what is to be, whether good or bad, is to be, in spite of all preaching, writing, or exhorting to the contrary. But here I shall be blamed in the same manner as Dr. Beattie (pages 23, 24) that, "in the blind rage of disputation, he hesitates not to deprive the ever blessed God of that very attribute, by which in the books of scripture, he expressly distinguishes himself from all false Gods, and than which nothing can be more essentially necessary to the government of the universe, rather than relinquish his fond claim to the fancied privilege of self-determination, a claim which appears to me just as absurd as that of self-existence, and which could not possibly do him any good if he had it." What Dr. Beattie has done, I do not know, as I have not read any of his works. As to myself, I can safely say, that I am very far from depriving the ever blessed God, of the attribute of prescience, or being able to foreknow every thing which he pleases to foreknow, so that by this he is still distinguished from false Gods, yet I cannot, I dare not deny the same ever blessed God, who is Almighty, the power of suspending such prescience at pleasure, or when he pleases and determines so to do, or in other words I cannot deny him to be able to have created a set of creatures and to have given them a power of self-determination, or a liberty of acting, or not acting in many cases, even in the same state of mind and with the same views of things, which power Dr. Priestley appears to deny to Almighty God as a thing impossible, (page 15,) and deprives him of the ability (though Almighty) to create any creatures but what are and must be constantly invariably and necessarily determined by some motives or cause, foreign to themselves (page 8). Man can make many wonderful machines which will perform an amazing variety

variety of regular mechanical motions, but they are all fore-known by man the maker, and so far as concerns the machines only, the motions are all necessarily made, yet they are still subject to the voluntary controll and interruption, of man the maker. To God alone belongs the power of making not a mere machine, but a creature endowed with a power of self-determination and liberty of acting, or not acting in many things at pleasure, without these actions being fore-known, or constantly and necessarily determined by any other being whatever. To say as (page 24,) Dr. Priestley says, that "a power of self-determination appears as absurd as that of self-existence," seems very strange, because we find these so different, that the greatest part of men have generally believed themselves to have been possessed of a power of self-determination; whereas, there scarce ever was a man so infatuated as to believe that he possessed a power of self-existence. I shall conclude this section with observing that man's power of self-determination, is in all cases wholly under the controll and restraint of Almighty God when he pleases, and all his future actions are capable of being foreknown by God if he pleases; but yet in many cases, they are left to the self-determining power in man, without any interruption from any other being, or absolute and certain foreknowledge by any other being whatsoever.

SECTION IV.

Of the Cause of Volition, and the Nature of the Will.

I Entirely agree with Dr. Priestley in this, that "in all investigations relating to human nature, the Philosopher will attentively consider appearances, and will not have recourse to more causes than are necessary to account for them." He sees, adds Dr. Priestley,

“ a stone whirled round in a string, and the planets per-
 “ form their revolutions in circular orbits, and he judges,
 “ from similar appearances, that they are all retained in
 “ their orbits by powers that draw them towards the
 “ centers of their respective motions. Again, a stone
 “ tends towards the earth by a power which is called
 “ gravity, and because, supposing the planets to have
 “ the same tendency to the sun, that the stone has to
 “ the earth, and to have been projected in tangents to
 “ their present orbits, they would revolve exactly as
 “ they are now observed to do, the Philosopher for that
 “ reason, concludes that the force which retains them
 “ in their orbits, is the very same power of gravity.”
 Here we may observe, that supposing, (in the words of
 Dr. Priestley) “ the planets to have the same tendency
 “ to the sun, that the stone has to the earth, and to have
 “ been projected in tangents to their present orbits,” yet
 they might or might not have revolved exactly as
 they are now observed to do, but in ellipses more
 or less eccentric according to the different celerity
 arising from the projectile force impressed at the first
 along the tangent lines, by Almighty God a self-deter-
 mining Being. Nay so great might the projectile force
 have been, that attraction, gravity, or their present centri-
 petal force towards the sun, could not have reduced the
 projectile force, or have made them revolve about the
 same at all. In such a case, the paths described would
 have been parabolas or hyperbolas, and the sun would
 have been the focus of the figure described, as is well
 known to mathematicians. Yet as this is not essential to
 the matter in hand, I will say no more concerning it,
 but proceed with Dr. Priestley (page 26) to “ consider
 “ the actions of men in the same natural and simple
 “ view,” that is, not multiplying causes without neces-
 sity, “ Whenever any person (says he) makes a choice
 “ or comes to any resolution there are two circumstances
 “ which are evidently concerned in it, viz. what we
 “ call the previous disposition of the mind, with respect
 “ to love or hatred, for example, approbation or dis-
 “ approbation, of certain objects, &c. and the ideas of
 “ external objects, then present to the mind, that is,
 “ the

" the view of the objects which the choice or resolution
 " respects." Very well, with such a *previous disposition*
of the mind, and view of the objects, I will proceed to
 examine what follows, " Let (says he page 27) the ob-
 " jects be two kinds of fruit, apples, and peaches. Let
 " it be supposed that I am fond of the former, and have
 " an aversion to the latter, and that I am disposed to
 " eat fruit. In these circumstances, the moment they
 " are presented to me, I take the apples, and leave the
 " peaches." Very true, so it may be. The matter is
 not what I actually do in these circumstances, but
 whether my mind has a power of self-determination
 enabling me to do otherwise. Dr. Priestley asserts that
 I have not, but that " in the same disposition to eat
 " fruit, and retaining my predilection for apples, I
 " should always infallibly do the same thing." The
 reason, motive, or " cause of this choice (Dr. Priestley
 " says) was evidently my liking of apples and my dis-
 " liking of peaches; and though an inclination or af-
 " fection of mind, be not gravity, it influences me, and
 " acts upon me as certainly, and necessarily as this
 " power does upon a stone." I have before shown,
 that gravity does not always certainly and necessarily
 influence and act upon bodies so as to cause them to fall
 down or descend; much less does an inclination or af-
 fection of mind, certainly and necessarily determine
 the choice of the mind. Suppose with Dr. Priestley,
 that two kinds of fruit, apples and peaches, are presented
 to me, that I am fond of apples or desire and approve them,
 that I am not so fond of peaches, but have rather an a-
 version to them; and also that I am disposed or desirous
 to eat one of the two. In such a case, if a man seriously
 considers the power with which he is conscious to him-
 self he is endued, can he say that he must necessarily
 eat apples, and necessarily refrain from eating peaches?
 I have been in the very situation, the same disposition of
 mind, the same view of the objects, with a predilection
 for apples, and yet I did not eat either. Surely in this
 situation, a man has power to take and eat a peach, not-
 withstanding even a vehement desire for an apple, or he
 has power to refrain tasting either. Our will appears to

be in the power of the mind to determine upon action or non-action at pleasure, though love, hatred, fear, &c. are passions or affections of the mind, and the mind so far as influenced by them appears to be wholly passive. If, I love, esteem, or approve of any object whatever, I may easily perceive upon consideration that I cannot in the least abate or diminish that love, esteem, or approbation, so long as the object appears to me in the same amiable light. On the contrary, if it once appears to me in a less lovely or estimable view, my love and esteem will diminish exactly in proportion. If I strive in that case ever so earnestly, I cannot raise my love and esteem of it to the former pitch, nor by any means increase my love for it one jot, unless I can make it appear more lovely. On the contrary, if by any means the same object becomes much more lovely and estimable to me in appearance than ever it was before, my love, approbation, and esteem immediately increase in the same proportion, even my utmost endeavours to diminish or abate them notwithstanding. The same will hold good with regard to fear and other passions of the mind. Desire to enjoy any thing, also increases or diminishes exactly in proportion to the real or imaginary good, or pleasure attending the same, without our being able to increase or abate that desire, so long as we will or are willing to consider and attend to it; yet notwithstanding that we have a self-determining power or power of choice in the mind, which is able to restrain us so far from acting even according to our vehement desires, that we can keep them down within proper bounds, and frequently so overcome them that we are not necessitated to indulge them at all. Nay, so far is an affection or desire for the apples from necessarily influencing me, that I am able by the power of self-determination within me, entirely to overcome my predilection or desire for apples, and not to taste them at all, even though my desire for them may continue not in the least diminished so long as they are in my presence. If I have no power to restrain my desires, how can I be blameable if I drink any liquor which I desire, till I be intoxicated? or, if I endeavour by every means possible
to

to enjoy the first agreeable woman I meet, provided I have a desire so to do, or in Dr. Priestley's words, provided I have a liking, a predilection for them? No, thank God, I perceive in myself a power of self-determination, an active power in my mind, by which I am enabled frequently to overcome my predilections, and any irregular desire however vehement, without being as certainly and necessarily determined thereby as a stone is determined by gravity to fall, which Dr. Priestley asserts to be his case, as being a necessarian in his 27th page. Dr. Priestley proceeds thus (page 28) "In all regular deliberations concerning any choice every reason or motive is distinctly attended to, and whatever appears to be the stronger, or the better reason, always determines us. In these cases, the choice and the motive correspond precisely to an effect and its cause." It appears strange to me that Dr. Priestley should here mention regular *deliberations*, because according to his system, deliberation appears to be impossible. He says the choice and the motive correspond precisely to an effect and its cause. Now, pray what possible room for deliberation, where a certain operating cause must produce a certain effect? How can there be any regular deliberation in us as men, whether gravity shall or shall not cause a stone in vacuo to fall? There can be no deliberation regular or irregular about the matter. Deliberation naturally implies, in the deliberating subject, a power of self-determination to do or not to do, otherwise there could be no time for deliberation, because the choice or determination would instantaneously follow the motive, as the effect does the necessary efficient cause. If, notwithstanding the motives influencing, a man has power to suspend his choice or determination, for or against action during one minute till he hath deliberated; he certainly has it equally in his power to suspend his choice, and to deliberate another minute, and after that another minute, and so on *ad infinitum*. Consequently, he is under no necessity of ever determining to act according to the motive, which is directly contrary to what a stone can do. The instant gravity

begins to act as a cause, the effect of the stone falling takes place without any time whatever being left for deliberation. Hence, we may clearly see the inconsistency of that doctrine of Dr. Priestley, which supposes the choice of the mind of man to depend with equal certainty upon the motive influencing, as a stone falling depends upon gravity; and yet that the mind of man has time for regular deliberation before it chooses to act, notwithstanding such necessary influence of motives.

“ Since every deliberate choice (says Dr. Priestley, page 29th) is regulated by motives, we ought as philosophers, to take it for granted, that every choice is made in the same manner, and is subject to the same rules, and therefore determined by motives, by something that may be called liking, or disliking, approving or disapproving, &c. depending upon the previous state of the mind, with respect to the object of choice; since the mere facility or readiness with which a choice is made, cannot make it to be a thing different in kind from a choice made with the greatest deliberation.” It is very true, that man has generally a motive or motives for every deliberate choice; yet, as observed before, these motives do not so necessarily and certainly influence him to action; but that he has time to deliberate by what motives he will be excited to act, or whether he will not by his own inherent power of self-determination, resolve not to act at all; according to the motives of liking or disliking, approving or disapproving, &c. It is also true, that liking or disliking, approving or disapproving any object, is not in my power to increase or diminish so long as it appears to me the very same in every respect: They will be great or small, exactly in proportion to the apparent agreeableness, or disagreeableness of the object under consideration. Notwithstanding this, I am conscious to myself, and my daily experience teaches me, that I have it in my power to restrain that liking or disliking, that approving or disapproving, from necessitating me to do any one thing good or bad in consequence. Though I cannot abate or lessen my desire for, or aversion to a thing, yet I am not necessarily caused to pursue that desire
or

or aversion to all their consequences, as necessarily and certainly as gravity if not interrupted, causes a stone to fall. By that power of self-determination which God has given me, I am able to restrain myself from acting according to my desires, considered as necessarily influencing motives. But, says Dr. Priestley (page 30) "We see evidently, not only that men are determined "to act by certain motives, but that the vigour of their "actions corresponds also to what may be called the "intensity of their motives. If a master be actuated "simply by his anger, he will beat his servant more "violently, and continue the correction longer, in "proportion to the degree of his anger, or the apprehended cause of his displeasure; and kindness operates exactly in the same manner, a stronger affection "prompting to greater, and more kind offices, than a "weaker." This exactly coincides with Dr. Priestley's former assertion, and therefore what is said before, may serve for an answer also here in a great measure. For, though it be very true, that the vigour of men's actions generally correspond to the intensity of their motives, yet we find every wise man restrains such actions within the bounds of prudence, notwithstanding his motives may be ever so intense. And though every man's anger and displeasure increases in proportion to the apprehended cause, yet every one is obliged by the universal laws of God and man, to restrain that anger and displeasure, and keep them within due bounds, by that active power of mind which he has and which impowers him to subdue his own passions; so that the vigour or violence of his actions shall not equal the intensity of his anger when very great, considered as a motive to such action. If man had not such a power, he could be no more culpable, or liable to punishment for the most outrageous, cruel, and bloody effects of his anger, than a stone (if capable of suffering pain) would be culpable and liable to punishment if it was actuated by gravity, so that it necessarily rolled down a mountain and killed an hundred men. And though Dr. Priestley says (pages 30, 31) "opposite motives, as causes of love and hatred, "are known to ballance one another, exactly like weights "in

" in opposite scales. According to all appearance,
 " nothing can act more invariably or mechanically:"
 yet every man must plainly see that my hatred of any
 object whatever, how great soever, though I cannot in
 the least diminish it, that considered as one of Dr.
 Priestley's motives, it cannot invariably influence me
 to hostile or cruel actions against the object; but in spite
 of any influence therefrom, I can, by my own self-de-
 termining power, resolve to use the object kindly, gen-
 tly, and humanely, and can act accordingly: That is,
 though I cannot diminish my hatred in the least so long
 as the object appears in the same odious view; yet, by
 that self-determining power which I am conscious I en-
 joy, I am enabled so far to restrain the natural tendency
 and operations of my hatred, as to prevent any action
 whatever being done by me against the hated object, not-
 withstanding the influence which my hatred, as a mo-
 tive, may have upon me to the contrary. The same may
 be said of love, anger, desire, aversion, &c. all these as
 motives, have an influence upon the mind, and natu-
 rally tend to incline the will of man; yet our own con-
 sciousness and daily experience convince us, that the
 self-determining power which we perceive within us,
 can, and frequently does, so regulate and controul the
 influence of the passions, as wholly to prevent their na-
 tural operation. This appears to me a sufficient answer
 to Dr. Priestley's question, page 32, " Can it be sup-
 " posed that the will, whatever it be, should be of such a
 " nature as both to be properly influenced or acted upon
 " by motives, and likewise by something that bears no
 " sort of relation to motive, and consequently has a
 " mode of action intirely different from that of motive?
 " This cannot but appear exceedingly improbable, if not
 " impossible." Although the passions do influence, or act
 upon the mind of man in proportion to their intensity,
 yet man's will, by a self-determining power in the mind,
 can overrule such influence in a great measure, and can
 and often does influence man at pleasure, even to a quite
 contrary mode of action. Suppose a cannon ball, or
 other heavy body, suspended at an equal distance be-
 twixt the earth and the body of the large planet Jupiter;
 and

and that no other body intervened. The earth is a motive of attraction, * would, by the general laws of matter, influence the ball to fall towards it. But Jupiter with a much greater influence, would so overcome the attraction of the earth, as not only wholly to suppress the same, but would even draw the ball with an increasing velocity towards itself, in a line directly contrary to the earth's attraction. Thus then will be a mode of action entirely different from that of the earth's attraction, considered as a motive or moving power. Hence we perceive that it is neither impossible nor improbable, nor even unusual in the laws of nature, to find motives or moving powers acting upon bodies in different and diametrically opposite lines, whilst the lesser is always restrained and overcome by the superior force of the greater. Then why cannot the mind of man be actuated or influenced by the passions, and in proportion to their intensity too, and yet such influence be overcome by the will, so that a mode of action, quite different from the natural influence of the passions, may be produced? But Dr. Priestly further says, pages, 32, 33 "According to the modern metaphysical hypothesis, the will is "of such a nature, as to be influenced sometimes by the "passions or motives, and sometimes in a manner, in "which neither passion nor motive have any thing to do, "and of which it is not pretended that any idea can be "given, but by saying that it is self-determined, which, in "fact, gives no idea at all, or rather implies an absurdity, "viz. that a determination which is an effect, takes place "without any cause at all. For, exclusive of every thing "that comes under the denomination of motive, † there

* It should be noticed, that I here speak according to the language of natural philosophers about attraction; but yet I do not mean that attraction is a real entity causing the effect, but I use it as the word is generally used to express the unknown cause of a known effect. (See pages 17, 18).

† And a motive is a nonentity a mere term, a nothing, and consequently there is nothing whatever to produce the determination according to Dr. Priestly. For he can never explain what sort of a being a motive is, though he makes it produce such prodigious effects. (See page 10).

" is

“ is really nothing left that can produce the determination. Let a man use what words he pleases, he can have no more conception how we can sometimes be determined by motives, and sometimes without any motive, than he can have of a scale being sometimes weighed down by weights and sometimes by a kind of substance that has no weight at all, which whatever it be in itself, must with respect to the scale, be nothing.” To this I answer, that the will is a faculty arising from a power of self-determination in the mind of man, or a self-determining power, which power is the cause of every effect, called choice in the mind of man; so that there is not an effect without a cause, as before observed, (page 21).

And though this power cannot be described but by its properties and effects, no more can memory, judgment, nor the passions. We are conscious of some power working such and such effects in us, but we cannot be so weak as to suppose that power to be a little being within us, separate and distinct from our minds, but a power existing in the mind, which is capable of being described no way but by its properties and effects: And the mind appears to be capable of exerting this power at pleasure; whereas, Dr. Priestley's motives seem to be something foreign to the mind, and even motives to it, as necessarily and uncontrollably influencing it, in spite of its very self.

As to the instance of the scale weighed down sometimes by weights, and sometimes by no weights, here again repeated, I refer the reader for satisfaction to pages 16, 17. of this work. “ Another argument, (says Dr. Priestley page 33.) for the necessary determination of the will may be drawn from the analogy that it bears to the judgment. It is universally acknowledged that the judgment is necessarily determined by the perceived agreement or disagreement of ideas. Now, the will is but a kind of judgment, depending upon the perceived preferableness of things proposed to the mind, which apparent preferableness results as necessarily from the perception of the ideas themselves, as that of their agreement or
“ dif-

“ disagreement. In fact, all the difference, between
 “ judgment and will, is, that, in the former case, the
 “ determination relates to opinions, and in the latter to
 “ actions; and as all the ancients have well observed,
 “ the faculties of the soul are only different modes in
 “ which the same principle acts; the judgment being
 “ the mind judging, and the will being the mind wil-
 “ ling; and it would be very extraordinary indeed, if
 “ the same mind should not be determined in a similar
 “ manner in these two very similar cases; and that if
 “ there be a self-determining will, there should not be
 “ a self-determining judgement also. In reality, the
 “ latter is not more absurd and contrary to all appearances
 “ than the former.” The doctrine concerning judge-
 ment here laid down, I grant, viz. that it is necessarily
 determined by the agreement or disagreement of ideas.
 I cannot judge or believe differently from what things
 appear to me. If a thing appears certain, my judge-
 ment and belief are necessarily the same; if a thing
 appears doubtful, my judgement and belief are likewise
 so. My judgement, opinion, and belief must be de-
 termined necessarily in proportion to the absolute cer-
 tainty, doubtfulness, or total uncertainty of the case, as
 it appears to me. My judgement is determined, and
 my belief settled that this is paper on which I write;
 neither can I believe the contrary, so long as it appears
 to me to be so. But if afterwards by a train of rea-
 soning, or by some other means I make some new dis-
 covery concerning it; if, for example, I find myself
 deceived, and clearly perceive that it is parchment and
 not paper: I say, if this should happen, then I cannot
 any longer believe it to be paper. Every man who ex-
 amines the powers of his own mind, will perceive that
 his judgement, opinion, and belief are necessarily and
 involuntarily formed and determined by the appearance
 of things, without any possibility of judging or believing
 otherwise, so long as things appear in the same manner.
 But this is not the case, with regard to man's will. I
 plainly perceive in my mind a self-determining power
 by which I am enabled to write on this paper, or not to
 write, according to my own pleasure. Though I find
 my

my judgment and belief are involuntary acts, such as I cannot suspend or alter, unless the appearance of the thing alters. I cannot judge or believe this, upon which I write, to be paper or not to be paper, according to my own pleasure; neither can I judge or believe, that my judgment and will are equally determined by necessity, according to motives or appearance of things. Because they appear to me to be two faculties or powers of the mind so very different in my judgment and opinion; if I may be allowed to call judgment a faculty or power, which appears to me to be rather an involuntary act of the mind, or the necessary and involuntary result and effect of the mind, judging according to appearance. Hence we may perceive, that so far from the mind being determined *in a similar manner, in these two very similar cases*, viz. the judgment or the mind judging, and the will or the mind willing, that the two things are very different, the judgment being the necessary and involuntary result or product of the mind judging, produced by the mind perceiving the appearance of things, which judgment the mind is under an uncontrollable necessity* of making, provided it wills or is willing to attend to such appearance; whereas the will is not necessary and involuntary, but a power given by God to man's mind, by which man is enabled in many cases to act or not act, to attend to the appearance of things or not, entirely at pleasure. If the mind wills or is willing to attend to such appearance of things, a certain or uncertain judgment necessarily follows. If the mind wills not or is not willing to attend in the least to such appearance, no judgment is or can be formed. So that the judgment is so far from being a power of self-determination, that it seems like all other necessary acts of the mind (as considered in themselves without regard to the will) to depend in some measure upon the will arising from the self-determining power of the mind, even for its very existence. "But, says Dr. Priestley, (page 35) what is desire besides a wish to obtain some apprehended good? And is not every wish a volition?

* Unless controlled by God or some Being superior to itself,

" Now is it possible that an apprehended good should
 " not be the object of desire, whether controlled by
 " some other desire, &c. or not? For the same reason,
 " that a present good gives a present pleasure, an absent
 " good excites desire, which like any other of the pas-
 " sions, is universally allowed to be a perfectly me-
 " chanical thing. Since, therefore, desire necessarily
 " implies volition, we have a clear case of the will be-
 " ing necessarily determined by the circumstances which
 " the mind is in; and if in one case, why not in all
 " others? especially as in fact, every volition is no-
 " thing more than a desire, viz. a desire to accomplish
 " some end, which end may be considered as the object
 " of the passion or affection?" The doctrine of desire
 being a wish, and every wish a volition, I can by no
 means admit, if by volition be meant the will or im-
 mediate act of the self-determining power of man's
 mind, by which it is enabled to act or not to act, to in-
 dulse the wish and desire, or not to indulge it at pleasure.
 Every thing which I apprehend to be good and desire-
 able, I am under a necessity of desiring or wishing for,
 so long as it appears desirable; but the self-determining
 power of my mind can and frequently does (as every
 man, I dare say, has experienced) will to controul that
 desire and wish; so that a man is not compelled or ne-
 cessitated to do one action, nor to take one step towards
 obtaining what he desires, though within his reach, as
 in the case before-mentioned of an hungry man with
 good victuals before him. In such a case his desire and
 wish must necessarily be vehement and eager to eat and
 satisfy himself, neither can he avoid such desire so long
 as the meat is before him and he sees it, yet it cannot
 be denied but that he can refrain from eating for a small
 time, by the power of self-determination which he has, and
 which enables him to restrain his desires from acting, or
 in other words, he wills not to eat, notwithstanding such
 vehement desire. Any man by supposing himself in
 such a situation, may find that he cannot hinder his de-
 sire, though he can hinder his indulging that desire.
 Hence, we plainly perceive the difference between what
 is generally termed desire, or a wish to obtain an appre-

hended good, and the self-determining power, which can and frequently does will to refuse that apprehended good which we desire or wish for, or towards which we are necessarily inclined. If we had not such a self-determining power to controll and restrain our natural wishes and desires in our present state, where our " hearts are deceitful above all things and desperately " wicked."* this world would be a continued scene of wickedness and confusion. But the case is, our desires and aversions arise and are excited necessarily, by something apparently agreeable or disagreeable to us. Both our own consciousness and experience plainly inform us that we have such a self-determining power, which is superior to all the passions and affections of the mind, and which frequently wills to restrain us, and does actually restrain us from carrying our desires into execution, by which we are enabled out of two things not equally agreeable, to choose and take either, even that which is the more disagreeable one of the two. I hope, what I have said above will prove a sufficient answer to Dr. Priestley's fourth section.

SECTION V.

Of the supposed Consciousness of Liberty, and the Use of the Term Agent.

I Shall pass over Dr. Priestley's quotations from Dr. Price, and also what he says of our being certainly influenced by our desires, to choose out of two kinds of fruit, that which appears the most desirable; as I have considered the nature of our desires and aversions in the last Section. I therefore proceed to what Dr.

* Jeremiah xvii. 9.

Priestley says (pages 47, 48) about consciousness:
 " All (says he) that a man can possibly be conscious
 " of, is, that nothing hinders his choosing or taking
 " whichever of the fruits appears to him more desire-
 " able, or his not making any choice at all, according
 " as the one or the other shall appear to him preferable
 " upon the whole. But there is always some reason for
 " any object, or any conduct appearing desirable or
 " preferable; a reason existing either in a man's own
 " previous disposition of mind, or in his idea of the
 " things proposed to him. In things of small conse-
 " quence, or in a very quick succession of ideas, the
 " reason may be forgotten, or even not be explicitly
 " attended to; but it did exist, and actually contri-
 " buted to make the thing or the conduct appear desire-
 " able at the time." It is very true, that our consci-
 " ousness and experience shews no more as to power of
 " choice than what Dr. Priestley has in the first lines
 " enumerated: And it is also true, that there is always
 " some reason for any thing appearing desirable or the
 " contrary. But yet, neither that desirableness, nor the
 " reason thereof, so necessarily impells a man to choose
 " what is desirable, but his self-determining power can
 " enable him to make another choice, or not to choose at all.
 " But the Doctor says (page 48, 49.) " whenever we re-
 " flect upon our own conduct, or speculate concerning
 " that of others, we never fail to consider, or ask, what
 " could be the motive of such or such a choice; always
 " taking for granted, that there must have been some
 " motive or other for it; and we never suppose, in
 " such cases, that any choice could be made without
 " some motive, some apparent reason or other. When
 " it is said that a man acts from mere will (though this
 " is not common language) the word is never used in a
 " strict metaphysical sense, or for will under the influ-
 " ence of no motive, but the meaning is, that in such
 " a case a man acts from wilfulness or obstinacy, i. e.
 " to resist the control of others, the motive being to
 " shew his liberty and independence, which is far from
 " being a case in which a man is supposed to act
 " without any motive at all." It is certain, that men do

frequently enquire for the motive or cause, why another man acted so or so, in order to know from what principle he acted, whether from a principle of desire, aversion, &c. or merely from his will or power of self-determination. And though it be urged, that when a man is said to act from mere will, this is not common language; yet, I beg leave to observe the contrary. I myself making the enquiry, why a person would do such or such an action, have been frequently answered, because I will do it: And when I have gone further, and said, but for what reason will you do it? I have been commonly answered, *I will, because I will.* I believe this to be common language, and I believe upon enquiry it will be found no uncommon answer. Here the only motive assigned, is the self-determining power acting by the will: And as in such a case, it is the sole cause of action as a power of the mind; it is no matter by what other names it be called, whether wilfulness, obstinacy, or any other, so long as the meaning is the same. “ If (says Dr. Priestley, pages 49, “ 50) what has been stated be the fact, and the whole “ fact (and for the truth of the representation, I appeal “ to every man’s own feeling and persuasion) it must “ be quite arbitrary, and can have no sort of consequence, except what is merely verbal; whether I say “ that the cause of the choice was the motive for it “ (which Dr. Price very properly defines to be the “ judgment or desire) or the mind in which that choice “ takes place, that is, myself or some other person; “ and to this cause it is that we ascribe agency or determining power. In the former case, it is the power “ or force of the motive, and in the latter that of the “ person.” I entirely agree with Dr. Priestley in referring the whole to every man’s own feeling and persuasion, or to his consciousness and experience, since we have nothing else in this case to argue from. But when Dr. Priestley allows the *cause of choice* to be either the motive for it, or the *mind* in which that choice takes place; he seems to give up the doctrine he has been all-along endeavouring to establish, viz. That motives certainly and necessarily influence us in the de-
ter-

termination of our choice, as gravity influences a stone to fall. (Page 27). Dr. Priestley here admits the *mind* in which that choice takes place to be sometimes the cause of the choice. He says, "it is merely verbal, "whether I say that the cause of the choice was the "motive for it, or the mind in which that choice takes "place." This is allowing one of the two to be the cause, which is all I contend for. I acknowledge the choice to be frequently made in consequence of the influence of motives, such a judgment, desire, aversion, &c. And I further allow, that the choice is always made so, except in such cases where it is made by the *mind* itself in which that choice takes place, *i. e.* by the mind acting by mere will, or rather merely by its self-determining power, even sometimes contrary to all outward motives or inducements whatever; nay, even without any cause whatever, except its own self-determining power, by which it is enabled to act or not to act at pleasure; and this is what I call free agency, or self-determination. Dr. Priestley here admits two causes of choice, *viz. The power or force of motive, and the power or force of the person.* This latter power or force, can mean nothing else, that I know of, but the power or force of the person's mind, which must imply the power of free agency and self-determination. In the former case, we suppose the power of the motive to influence the action; in the latter case, the power of the person's mind. What power then of the person's mind can it be? As a power of the mind or belonging thereto, it can be nothing foreign to it, and it must be a power to choose something. To choose what? To choose to do some certain action; as for instance, to lift my hand to my head. But if I have a power within myself to do this, I must have a power not to do it; because if I have not a power to let it alone, I am under a necessity of doing it. But I can be under no necessity of doing any thing, unless I be compelled to do it by some power or force, extraneous or foreign to myself; and if I be necessarily compelled to do it by some foreign force or power, then I do it not by the force or power of my own mind or person, or by a power within myself.

self. But Dr. Priestley allows the cause of choice may be, the power or force of my own person or mind; that is the free will or self-determining power; by which the mind is able, to controll and restrain all the passions considered as motives to action; for I can conceive no other power in myself. That whatever a man has a power of person or mind to do, he has also a power to let alone, is very plain from hence. Every man's consciousness and feeling, tells him, that he has a power or force of mind, whereby he can shut his eyes; and he has also a power not to shut them: But a man has no power to cause a pulsation of his arteries, neither has he a power to hinder or stop such pulsation. The pulsation and stopping of such pulsation, are both owing to something foreign to the mind; whereas, the shutting or opening a man's eyes, whilst well, frequently depend upon a force or power of the mind, or as it were a power within it, and not always upon the power of motives; so neither has a man any power to cause a blush at pleasure; and accordingly, he has no power to hinder or restrain a blush at pleasure, both being involuntary. Hence, then, appears the difference of the two powers which determine the mind in its choice, from Dr. Priestley's own words, viz. "motives which influence it sometimes and in some degree; but not necessarily and unavoidably, and the mind itself endued with a power of self-determination to act or not, to do or not to do, entirely at pleasure."

But in opposition to this, and to shew that men are necessarily influenced by motives, Dr. Priestley further says, (pages 55, 56) "Since the common language of men corresponds to this view of the subject, it is a proof, that in fact men do see it in this light, and if they do not pursue this doctrine to its distant and necessary consequences, it is for want of sufficient reflection or strength of mind. Indeed, this one simple truth respecting the necessary influence of motives on the human mind, leads us much beyond the apprehensions of the vulgar, but not to any thing that ought

“ ought to alarm the philosopher or the christian.” I have before observed that the common language of men does not correspond to this ; because if a man be asked, why he did so or so ? or what motives he had for such an action ? Sometimes he will assign his motives or reasons, and sometimes he will answer that it was his mind, or that he did so, because he would do so, or to that effect. This being frequently the answer, shews the common sense of men to be, that their actions originate from two causes, viz. outward motives or reasons, and the self-determining power of the mind, *i. e.* sometimes from one cause and sometimes another. Indeed, Dr. Priestley himself seems to allow the same in page 50, as before observed ; though here he calls the necessary influence of motives on the human mind a simple truth, and such an one as leads us much beyond the apprehensions of the vulgar. To which I say, that if it be a truth and do so, it is no merit in Dr. Priestley upon his own plan to believe it, because he is necessitated so to do ; neither is there any thing amiss in my denial of it, and so herding with what he calls the vulgar, since I am also necessitated so to do, because according to Dr. Priestley, (page 8) “ no event could have been otherwise than it has been, is, or is to be ;” and therefore I hope he will accept of this, according to his own principles, as a sufficient excuse for my denying what he asserts, and for my writing in opposition to him, without the least anger or emotion whatever. ”

SECTION

SECTION VI.

Whether Liberty be essential to practical Virtue; and of moral and practical Necessity.

IN the 58th page, Dr. Priestley introduces Dr. Price, saying, "Who must not feel the absurdity of saying my volition was produced by a foreign cause? meaning a motive," says Dr. Priestley; and then he adds, "Now this is actually the common language of all the world, and no body feels any absurdity in it; because the consequences he draws from it by no means follow, viz. that then the volition is not my own. It is my volition, whatever was the motive that produced it, if it was a volition that took place in my mind." I have observed before, that the common language of men is not actually so; and I shall here, I hope, satisfactorily shew that the consequences Dr. Price draws from it are fair ones; and that if our volitions be produced necessarily by foreign causes, they cannot with propriety be called our own. Whatever is immediately caused or produced by any thing foreign to us, is not, cannot, be our own production. If a volition of my mind be produced by any foreign cause, it is not the production of my own mind. Though it be produced in my mind, yet the cause producing is out of my mind, and, in such a case, it is no more my volition, than a motion may be said to be a child's motion, if a man take a child's arm and move it, without the child in the least contributing thereto. Neither the volition nor the motion, can in either case be properly called our own; for though the motion took place in the child's arm, it cannot properly be said to be the child's motion, or a motion produced by the child, but the motion of the man producing the same. And likewise, though the volition take place in my mind, it cannot properly be said

said to be my volition, or a volition produced by my mind, if it be produced in my mind by some extraneous or foreign cause. So likewise another person giving me a wound without my consent, it is frequently called the wound of the person so giving, as producing it: And although in some sense it may be called my wound, as being in my flesh, yet the wounding person only is responsible and punishable for the wound and its consequences. How then can I be responsible or punishable, for a volition in my mind produced there by some foreign cause without my consent, or for the unavoidable consequences of that volition? Having done with this, I pass over Dr. Priestley's quotation, from the ingenious Dr. Price, and his observations upon them, as being only advantages, which Dr. Priestley has taken from Dr. Price's words being not sufficiently expressive of what it is almost evident he meant to say. What he has said appears to be true, but unfortunately, sometimes, he has not used so many words to explain himself as was necessary to prevent Dr. Priestley from putting an erroneous construction upon his meaning. Wherever Dr. Price's words will bear two interpretations, we surely should make use of that which tends to establish the doctrine he was attempting to support, thus making him his own interpreter.

The next place I shall note is, (page 65) "It is only
 " where the necessity of sinning arises from some other
 " cause than a man's own disposition of mind, that we
 " ever say there is any impropriety in punishing a man
 " for his conduct. If the impossibility of acting well
 " has arisen from a bad disposition or habit, it's having
 " been impossible with that disposition or habit to act vir-
 " tuously, is never any reason for our forbearing punish-
 " ment, because we know that punishment is proper to
 " correct that disposition and that habit, and that we
 " thereby both reform the sinner and warn others, which
 " are all the just ends of punishment; every thing else
 " deserving no other name than vengeance, and being
 " manifestly absurd, because answering no good pur-
 " pose." It is very clear that the propriety of punishing
 a man for any offence arises from his intention, or it
 may

may be called disposition of mind, to commit the crime, but that propriety also includes this supposition, that the man had it in his power to prevent, restrain, or overrule that bad intention, or disposition of mind, or that he was not under any certain or unavoidable necessity of offending. It is equally unjust to punish a man for an offence by him committed, if certain and unavoidable, from what ever cause it originated, as to punish him for an offence by him committed, which was necessarily and unavoidably caused or produced by his bad disposition, provided that disposition never was in his power to be made otherwise. Dr. Priestley says it is never any reason to *forbear punishment*, because it was *impossible, with that disposition or habit, to act virtuously*. If so, the punishment appears to be not for the crime, but for the bad disposition or habit which necessarily produced it; yet unfortunately for the poor man whose punishment is not to be forborn, neither could he possibly avoid that bad disposition and habit, for Dr. Priestley says, (page 8) "no event could have been otherwise than it has been, is, or is to be;" surely then his bad disposition was one event, which could not possibly be otherwise. It is the efficient producing cause of the action which ought to be punished, and not the passive instrument made use of. Upon the Necessarian system, the man who commits the crime is only a passive instrument, unavoidably and necessarily impelled to action; and though we may say he is punished for his bad disposition and habit, and not for the crime, yet it is only removing one step further: still the man is punished for what he could not possibly avoid; because the bad disposition of mind was equally necessary and unavoidable with the crime resulting from it, as above observed, it being an event which was to be. Therefore, whether the man be punished for the crime or bad disposition, he is certainly punished for doing what was certain and necessary to be done, or to happen, for an event which was certainly foreknown to come to pass at that time, many, very many years before he was born, and for what he could not possibly avoid, as it could not possibly be otherwise. I therefore may retort Dr. Priestley's

ley's words upon himself: " This can deserve no other name but that of vengeance, and is manifestly absurd, because answering no good purpose whatever ;" for, though Dr. Priestley says punishment is proper to correct that disposition and habit, in order to reform the sinner and warn others, yet, according to his doctrine, no alteration can be made, nor any good end answered that I can possibly conceive, because either the disposition and habit is certainly and necessarily to be corrected, or it is not ; the sinner is certainly and necessarily to be reformed, or he is not. If either or both of them are to be done, they will certainly and necessarily be done ; and if either or both of them are not to be done, they will certainly and necessarily be undone, whether any punishment be inflicted or no ; for not one thing could have been otherwise, or will be otherwise than they have been and will be, though the offender's punishment be ever so exemplary or severe ; nor can any alteration be made but what is to be, whether Dr. Priestley writes, or preaches, or persuades, and advises, or he never does any one of them again. Certainly then upon Dr. Priestley's plan there can be no just end of punishment, as no alteration or amendment can thereby possibly be effected, but what must come to pass whether the man be punished or no ; consequently on his plan all punishment can only be *vengeance*, and *can answer no good end whatever*.

But Dr. Priestley, in order to shew that liberty is not essential to virtue, (in opposition to what Dr. Price asserts) but that a course of virtue is equal from whatever principle it arises, as the nature of it is the very same ; to support this, he says, (page 68) " if two men be in all respects the same inwardly, if they feel and act precisely in the same manner, upon all occasions ; how in the sight of God or man can there be more virtue in the present conduct of one than in that of the other, whatever difference there may have been with respect to the acquisition of that temper ? Every thing that is so confirmed as to become habitual operates exactly like what is called instinct ; for my own part I believe them to be in all cases
" the

" the very same thing) but does a course of virtue be-
 " come less virtuous in consequence of being persisted in,
 " and consequently being a more easy and mechanical
 " thing?" And a little after he adds, " Valerius Patercu-
 " lus, as is observed by Mr. Hobbes, praises Cato, because
 " he was good by nature, *et quia aliteresse non potuit.*"
 If two men be in all respects the same inwardly. Very
 true. If their inward temper of body and mind be the
 same; but where the natural constitution and temper
 is different, they cannot be inwardly the same, though
 their outward behaviour (acquired by labouring to
 overcome the natural bent and inclination of their in-
 ward temper and disposition) may be exactly similar.
 Notwithstanding this, there may be in one, and not in
 the other, a natural bad temper and disposition, strug-
 gling as it were to exert itself in actions corresponding
 to the same, or as St. Paul calls it, Rom. vii. 23. " A
 " law in the members, warring against the law of the
 " mind;" yet in a virtuous and prudent man, this will
 be so over-ruled and restrained by the self-determining
 power, or law of the mind, so as not to suffer the same
 to break out into vicious, or bad actions. A bad tem-
 per, or disposition, is a motive constantly inclining,
 but not necessarily impelling a man to a vicious con-
 duct. Surely the man whose mind is sufficiently reso-
 lute to determine upon acting contrary to such inward
 motive or inclination, temper or disposition when
 bad, and to act generally in a regular and upright man-
 ner, notwithstanding such natural disposition to the con-
 trary, has more merit, and even in some sense, more
 virtue, than he whose conduct is equally virtuous, but
 whose natural temper and disposition at the first, without
 any pains taken by him to acquire the same, constantly
 inclined him to virtue. It is true, that in both cases their
 outward conduct is supposed to be equally virtuous, yet the
 first has one inward virtue or good quality, which the
 other has not, viz. the virtue of resolving, upon con-
 stantly striving to overcome his natural bad temper and
 disposition, which inclines him to evil; whereas the
 latter has only to coincide or cooperate with his natural
 virtuous temper and inclination. Perhaps the following
 simile,

simile, may better explain this matter. Suppose two horses yoked to two carriages of equal weight, and apparently equal construction. The first horse draws the carriage after it, together with some inward hidden unknown and invisible weight tacked to it, whilst the latter horse goes forward with the carriage also, but the latter carriage by some inward unknown and invisible spring or power, is pushed on very nearly independent of the horse. In this case, though the two horses appear to exert equal power or strength, as they each draw a carriage apparently equal every way, yet it is plain that the first exerts much more power than it appears to do, and that the latter exerts much less. So likewise, though an equal course of virtue is certainly equal, yet the labour exerted and pains taken, to attain or acquire that virtuous course, may in different men be very different, and in one man may require a much superior exertion of power than in another, and that in proportion to the badness or viciousness of the natural temper and disposition, which is to be overcome and subdued. When a course of virtue is become habitual and consequently more easy, yet then the mind of man by its self-determining power seems able to control and overcome that habit, or as it may be defined* that aptitude or disposition of body or mind, acquired by frequently repeating the same act. Perhaps a man has by frequently repeating the same thing acquired some particular habit, as for instance, a habit of moving his foot, when he sings; that habit in him may be so prevalent and so constant, that many men might be induced to say, when he sings he always moves his foot, he cannot sing without it. This only implies a very great difficulty, or what may be called a moral, but not an ab-

* Dr. Priestley in the words above cited says, he believes habit and instinct to be one and the same thing. How he can with propriety say that the instinct, by which a canary bird taken from all others when very young, does in England build a nest exactly similar to what canary birds build where they generally are, is a habit I cannot imagine; since the bird never did the thing before, nor ever saw it done, consequently it cannot be habit; I could mention an hundred more such instances.

solute impossibility of doing otherwise. Let the habit acquired be ever so prevalent, it is only an habit, and by a steady attention of mind, a man can will and determine to do otherwise, or in other words, he can by attention and resolution of mind, sing without moving the foot at all. It is true that habit or custom has been by some called a second nature, but it was never that I know of asserted to be nature itself, so that a man could not possibly act contrary to it. If this was absolutely the case, an habit would be an equally certain and necessary cause of action, as what we call nature is, which necessarily causes the circulation of the blood; I mean so necessarily as to cause it without the concurrence of our will, and so the circulation is not called habitual but natural, as being in no measure acquired by ourselves or subject to our self-determining power. If habit was not under the power of the mind to control or restrain, but acted necessarily, when once we had acquired any habit, whether good or bad, it would act so necessarily upon us, like pulsation, that we never more could overcome it, but must all our lives after we had got such a habit, whether sleeping or waking, necessarily keep doing the same thing, because we should have no other power to control or overcome it, or to do otherwise. The above reasoning explains the meaning of Valerius Paterculus (as cited by Mr. Hobbes) when he said of Cato, that he was good by nature, and because he could not be otherwise. He certainly never meant an absolute impossibility of his doing amiss, but only that he had bestowed upon him, or had acquired so fixed an habit of goodness, that he must do a kind of violence to that habit before he could do what was bad, and consequently it was a great difficulty or a kind of moral impossibility.

Custom or habit (according to some ingenious philosophers) seems to be a train of motion, by a successive flux of animal spirits, which once set a-going, to perform an action or actions, they continue on in the same track, till it be worn as it were into a smooth path, and the motion and consequent action thereby become easy, and in some degree almost natural. If this be true,
which

which appears to me very probable, then though I be habitually inclined to pursue the smooth and easy path, yet I have a power in my mind of determining to take the more rugged one, and can actually do so; by repeating which frequently, it will also be trodden or beaten smooth and easy, and thence will arise a different habit or custom. But Dr. Priestley says, (page 69) "These maxims take away all virtue, goodness, and merit from the greatest and best of all beings, and likewise make it absurd to pray for virtue, since nothing that is communicated can be intitled to that appellation. And surely the common ideas and practices of mankind, at least of christians, reprobate the notion. In fact it is mere heathen stoicism, which allows men to pray for external things, but admonishes them that, as for virtue, it is our own, and must arise from within ourselves, if we have it at all." To which I answer, the contrary of all this appears to me evidently true. I granted before, that an equal course of virtue is equally virtuous, however that course be acquired. Though I allowed that one being may have that course naturally inherent, and another may have acquired it by much labour and pains. Therefore I certainly leave the goodness and virtue of the best of beings undiminished and not taken away, and as to the latter part, so far is liberty from discouraging men to pray for virtue, that believing it, appears to be the only reason for encouraging men to pray. For instance, a man prays to God to give him virtue, which he finds himself deficient in. The Almighty God, a prayer-hearing God, an active, free, and self-determining being, upon such prayer being offered up to him, determines to grant the petition, and give the humble petitioner, the virtue he asks. The virtue thus given, though communicated to him by God, is certainly intitled to the appellation of virtue, and so far intitles the petitioner also, to the appellation of virtuous; and what is more, he acquired the virtue petitioned for, through the virtue of praying, according to our Saviour's promise, Mat. vii. 7. "Ask and it shall be given you." Whereas according to Dr. Priestley's system, prayer can answer no

end whatever, good or bad, because whatever is prayed for, whether virtue or whatever else, if it is to be given or acquired, it will certainly be so, whether prayed for or not, in spite of all the powers in the world, for in this case, it is an event which is to be, and cannot happen otherwise; on the other hand, if it is not to be given nor acquired, the most devout and earnest prayer that ever was uttered cannot obtain it, or reverse the irrevocable order and decree of Dr. Priestley's necessity. When therefore Dr. Priestley, as in page 78, hopes that Dr. Price will not be alarmed at the moral influence of his opinions, as he, Dr. Priestley, is not alarmed at the moral influence of the opinions of Dr. Price, I think the cases so very different, that there ought to be no comparison. If Dr. Priestley believes and acts according to his own principles, he must think that every thing which will come to pass in future, must certainly and unavoidably do so, notwithstanding what Dr. Price or his opinions can say, write, or do; and therefore why should Dr. Priestley be alarmed at any thing, as it could not possibly be otherwise? But Dr. Price according to his principles may have reason to be alarmed at the moral influence of Dr. Priestley's opinions, least by their influence some men should be induced to act more viciously, than they otherwise would do, because he supposes men to be at liberty, and to have a power of self-determination, by which the mind is enabled in many cases to act well or ill, to do or not to do, at pleasure. But Dr. Priestley, in page 70, puts Dr. Price further to it, and says, "I wish Dr. Price would consider for a few minutes (and a very few, I should think, would suffice) what this self-determining power, of which he makes so great a boast, can be. By his own confession it is not judgment, it is not conscience, it is not affection, it is not desire, it is not hope or fear, nor consequently any of the passions." To this I answer, that though this self-determining power, be neither judgment, nor conscience, nor affection, nor desire, &c. nor any of the passions, yet like them, it can only be explained by its properties, or rather as it is an active

active power by its effects. We can form no idea of the existence of any of them but from our own inward consciousness and experience.

The greatest philosopher or metaphysician on earth cannot explain what body is, but by its properties. No one can say what is the subject in which these properties reside. If then we know nothing concerning the substance we call body or matter which we daily see, and about which we are so conversant, but what we know by its properties, such as that it is a solid resisting substance.* How can it be expected that we should know more of the subject called spirit than its properties, that is to say, how can we know more than that it is a thinking, willing, self-determining, free-acting, &c. substance: All we know of body is that it exists, because these properties or modes appear, which we argue cannot exist without a subject; and are not the latter properties of what we call spirit, which properties cannot more exist than the other, without a subject? We therefore know as much of one as the other. Accordingly, very learned men have denied the existence of

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each.

* Though solidity and resistance are denied by Dr. Priestley to be natural properties of matter, yet I believe every man's experience will convince him of the contrary; and though he asserts that certain organized systems of matter may be endowed with sensation and perception, yet it must be allowed, if this was so, that it is only some small part of such organized systems that have these properties, viz. the brain or place from whence the nerves originate, because we know that if a nerve be destroyed, the part of the body towards the extremity from such destroyed nerve, loses all sensation whatever, and is incapable of pleasure or pain. Does not this seem to point out something immaterial or distinct from matter, active and percipient, and which consequently perceives every thing which is communicated from outward objects by the nerves to their origin, the seat of the percipient being? A man must have very narrow notions of the Almighty's power to suppose that he could not, or has not, made some other kind of substance than matter, only because we see, feel, and hear, nothing else by our outward senses. Is it not as easy, and much more probable, to suppose that God has endowed all matter with the same natural properties universally, which we find in every part and particle, viz. solidity and inertness, or resistance? Is it likely

that

each. Dr. Berkley, Bishop of Cloyne, has denied the existence of body, and endeavoured to demonstrate the impossibility of its existence. Dr. Priestley has denied the existence of spirit, (at least in man) and endeavoured to demonstrate its non-existence. If we believe both these learned Gentlemen, then there is neither body nor spirit on this earth, nor even earth itself, and consequently no existence at all that we have yet a name for, or of which we have any idea whatever. Descartes says *cogito ergo sum*, I think, therefore I am; and indeed I really believe no man will ever be brought to believe that he is not, or exists not. Therefore either Dr. Berkley or Dr. Priestley, or both of them, must be wrong, and I must confess that I have motives or inducements to believe Dr. Berkley's doctrine rather than Dr. Priestley's; because as Descartes argues, we are as certain of something within us that thinks, wills, &c. as we are of our own existence. Whereas Dr. Berkley argues, that there is at least a possibility of the thinking subject having false and delusive ideas of solidity, re-

that he has taken away these natural properties from some parts thereof, and given them a contrary property, viz. activity, and supernaturally added to that the properties of sensation and perception? Or, is it not much more probable that he has created another kind of substance, with natural properties universally appropriated to it, viz. activity, thinking, sensation, perception, &c.? Indeed I must allow with Dr. Priestley that I can have no conception of any being that occupies no space, or is in no place, because a being which exists in no place nor space, exists nowhere at all, for space is infinite and every where. But why may not an immaterial being or substance, not made of matter, but active and intelligent, occupy a portion of space as well as a material one? If it cannot, I must agree with Dr. Priestley that my soul or immaterial being is no more in my body than it is in the moon, or rather that it is neither here, nor there, nor in any other place at all. How body and spirit act and react one upon another we know not; but we must allow that the Almighty was able to create a substance different in properties from the matter we perceive around us; and as he has infinite power, he could enable it to act upon matter by ways unknown to us; for we could never have conceived how we see, hear, &c. had we not experienced those actions; no more can we conceive the other action for want of proper experiments,

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fistance, &c. It is possible all this, I say, may be a deception, and the more so, because we find our senses do often deceive us. But in this we never can be deceived, *that we think*, unless we be also deceived in our existence. In short, we know nothing of any other power we possess and enjoy, whether it be the power of seeing, hearing, walking, thinking, or any other, but what we know from our own consciousness and experience, in the same manner that we know we possess or enjoy this self-determining power. Nor can we use any means that I know of, to demonstrate our enjoyment of any such powers, but what will hold equally good to demonstrate our self-determining power likewise. For instance, to convince a man that I enjoy two powers, suppose one the power of walking, the other the power of self-determination. I first assure him that I plainly perceive and am inwardly conscious that I have such powers, and my constant experience confirms the same; as a farther demonstration to him that I enjoy the power of walking, I would rise up and walk; and to demonstrate the power of self-determining, out of two or more things equally within my reach, I would determine to take which I please. Nay, I would even determine to take that one, which appears to be the least eligible to him and also to me. I do not know what else can be said or done, to demonstrate me to enjoy the two powers before-mentioned, or indeed any other power whatever. But it may still be urged, that though I determine to take the less eligible, yet I have a motive for such determination, which in this case is, that I may shew that I have a power so to do; and therefore my determination was necessarily influenced by the motive, and I have no power of self-determination at all. But let us apply the same method of reasoning to the other power of walking. Though I walk, I have a motive for such walking, which is that I may shew that I have a power so to do; and therefore my walking was necessarily influenced by the motive, and I have no power of walking at all. Two strange conclusions! equally inconsistent! And yet upon the first Dr. Priestley's doctrine seems to be almost wholly founded. Dr. Priestley adds (page 70) "it
 " must

“ must therefore be mere will, under no direction or
 “ guidance, because under no influence whatever; and of
 “ what value or use can such a principle be? Supposing
 “ the thing possible, (as I deem it to be absolutely im-
 “ possible that the will should act without judgment, con-
 “ science, affection, or any other motive) the determi-
 “ nation, though dignified with the appellation of Self,
 “ cannot be any thing but a mere random decision,
 “ which may be good or bad, favourable or un-
 “ favourable to us, like the chance of a die, and
 “ cannot possibly be of a nature to be intitled to praise
 “ or blame, merit or demerit, reward or punishment.”
 In answer to which, it is to be observed, that this self-
 determining power, or mere will, as it is called, is so
 far from being under no guidance, direction, or influ-
 ence, that it is under the immediate guidance or di-
 rection of the mind itself, or rather it is a power of the
 mind, by which it is enabled to determine upon acting
 according to motives, or in opposition to all motives
 within its view, or even not to act at all. And al-
 though as observed before, I cannot describe it, but
 by its properties or effects; no more can Dr. Priestley
 describe his motives in any other manner. But suppose,
 as Dr. Priestley asserts, that it is under no guidance or
 direction, but is a mere random decision, like the chance
 of a die; yet, even in that case, it is but like his mo-
 tives; because, although he has asserted some things,
 which he calls motives, to be the cause of all our actions;
 yet he has assigned no cause of these motives acting upon
 the mind of man, and consequently they arise from no
 cause, nor are under any guidance or direction that I
 have heard of. And if a cause of these motives was
 assigned, we still want another cause of that cause, for
 its guidance and direction, and so on till sooner or later
 we must arrive at necessity, Dr. Priestley's first cause,
 and therefore we might as well say at first, that necessity
 is the necessary, mediate, or immediate cause of all
 our actions, and they are all under its guidance and di-
 rection. For if man has no liberty or power of self-de-
 termination, it is no matter whether he be irresistibly
 impelled to every action, immediately by necessity, or
 many

many mediate necessary causes be made use of; as in either case man has no power at all of his own, but is unavoidably, certainly, and necessarily impelled to do every action he does, without a possibility of doing otherwise. The man who pleads for liberty, assigns the mind an active substance, as the director and guider of the self-determining power; whereas, the necessarian makes the mind wholly passive, never acting, but when first acted upon by something called motives, which are sometimes said to be its own passions, (as in the words just now cited) and sometimes mere nothings or non-entities, whilst the motives themselves are under no guidance or direction whatever, that I can see, as observed before. But perhaps it may be said, the motives are caused by the appearance of things. Granted. We are only one step removed. What causes the appearance of things? We must thus proceed till we get to necessity, which necessarily causes all events and things, present and to come, in such a manner, that they neither could have been nor can be otherwise, according to Dr. Priestley; and even this very necessity seems to be a nonentity, or mere nothing. Dr. Priestley says "he deems it impossible that the will should act without judgment, conscience, affection, or any other motive." It is very strange that the judgment, which is the result of the mind judging, or the act of judging when completed, should be here reckoned as one of his motives, which necessarily impells the mind to action. Judgment itself is an action of the mind completed, which Dr. Priestley makes the motive or cause of the mind's action; that is, he makes an action of the mind to be the motive or cause of the mind's action, and necessarily and unavoidably to impell the mind to action. Thus the action of the mind, which is an effect of the mind, is caused by the judgment, which is also an action or effect of the mind. This makes judgment, which is an action of the mind when formed or completed by the mind judging, as its efficient or producing cause, immediately to usurp dominion over the mind which made it, and tyrant-like to force its maker necessarily and unavoidably to action, in spite of all it can do to the contrary.

trary. The same kind of reasoning will shew the absurdity of all or any of the passions of the mind, being assigned, as necessary impelling causes of the mind to action. But Dr. Priestley, to support his argument, says further, (page 71) "I own that supposing the thing
 " to be possible, as I conceive it to be naturally impossible, I cannot see either any thing to boast of in such a
 " determination, or any foundation for property in it.
 " If nothing in the preceding state of his mind (which
 " would come under the description of motive) contributed to it, how did he contribute to it?" As to the possibility and also probability of the existence of such a power, I refer the reader to what I have said in page 23, and other places: And as to the determination being a man's own, or in what sense he has property therein, this plainly appears upon the supposition of man having a self-determining power, because in that case the determination is the voluntary production of my own mind, acting from a principle of self-determining power by mere will, enabling it to make such a determination, or to have made another determination instead thereof, exclusive of the power of motives, or any other thing foreign to, or out of the mind, which Dr. Priestley asserts so necessarily compell the mind to act in one certain manner, that there is no possibility of its acting otherwise. This case of a volition or action being properly a man's own, or the volition and action of some other thing which uses man only as a passive instrument, was considered (page 36) to which I refer the reader. But, says Dr. Priestley, (pages 71 and 72)
 " if a man reject a determination produced by motives,
 " because motives are no part of himself, he must likewise give up all claim to a determination produced
 " without motives, because that also would be produced
 " without the help of any thing belonging to himself.
 " If the former have a foreign cause, and therefore he
 " cannot claim it, the latter has no cause at all, and is
 " therefore what neither himself nor any other person
 " can claim." All this concerning our actions and determination being produced without any cause, upon the supposition of a self-determining power, I hope I have

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sufficiently cleared in many places, (particularly in pages 16, 17, 18, and 19) which I beg the reader would again carefully peruse, if not before satisfied; only I beg leave to observe here, that if this reasoning of Dr. Priestley's be deemed conclusive against man having any self-determining power, it is equally conclusive against the same power existing in God. If every determination produced in man without motives, be produced without the help of any thing belonging to himself, is not every determination produced in God without motives the same? And if neither the man nor any other person can claim such determination, because it is produced in him without any cause at all, is not every determination the same in God? In both God and man they are supposed to be powers of self-determination; and if such powers cannot exist, nor a determination cannot be made without some motive necessarily influencing, then God must also determine according to the necessary influence of motives, or he must determine without any cause at all. If the first be allowed, God could not possibly do any one thing but what he has done, and he is also necessarily and unavoidably influenced to every action; if the latter be allowed, a self-determining power must at least exist in God, and consequently is at least possible.

As Dr. Priestley has concluded this Section by asserting that "it will never be equally in our power to choose two things, when all the previous circumstances are the very same;" I beg his pardon for concluding it in direct opposition to him, but agreeably to what I have all along maintained, viz. that it is very often equally in our power to choose either of two things, which we please, even the least eligible of the two, when all the previous circumstances are the same. If a man in such a situation could not choose either of the two, but was obliged by necessity, or any other thing whatever foreign to himself, to take one only, and that a certain one, and was also equally obliged to leave the other, he has no choice at all in fact, nor can there be such an action as is generally meant by choosing, because choosing naturally implies a power to take either
of

of the two, at least I know no other meaning of the word. Here I beg to observe, that the mind as well as body, at the time of choice, are supposed to have all their natural powers, and not to be under any supernatural restraint or control.

SECTION VII.

Of the Propriety of Rewards and Punishments, and the Foundation of Praise and Blame on the Scheme of Necessity.

DR. PRIESTLEY in this Section asserts that there can be no use or propriety of rewards and punishments upon any other scheme than that of Necessity, but the greatest possible on that scheme. In order to prove this, he supposes himself the father of two children called A and B, with two minds differently constructed, A's mind being constructed according to the Necessarian scheme, and B's mind constructed upon the scheme of liberty or power of self-determination, whilst he himself, the father of both, is supposed to have them under his care to instruct and train up in a course of discipline, with a view to make them both virtuous and happy. In order to do this, he makes use of motives, such as present good and present evil, to influence their conduct. "Now, says he, (pages 75, 76) since motives have a certain and necessary influence on the mind of A, I know that the prospect of good will certainly incline him to do what I recommend to him, and the fear of evil will deter him from any thing I wish to dissuade him from; and therefore I bring him under the course of discipline above described with the greatest hopes of success." And again: "Every promise and every threatening, every reward and every punishment, judiciously administered, works to my end." Since A's mind is

(as

as geometricians, speak) by construction, supposed to be necessarily and irresistibly impelled and influenced by motives. It is to be sure very clear, that if good motives only act upon him, and all bad ones be kept from him, A's conduct must necessarily be absolutely good without any mixture of evil; on the other hand, if sometimes good motives, and sometimes bad ones act upon him, his life will be chequered with good and evil. A then is certain to be a good boy, provided his tutor can so manage as to have always good motives acting upon him. But there is one thing to be inquired into here, viz. whether the tutor himself is by construction supposed to be a necessarian or a free agent. If he be a free agent, and have plenty of both good and bad motives to bring out of some repository or storehouse, he is a very bad and wicked man if he does not always offer good motives to A, who must certainly and necessarily be so actuated by them as to be constantly good, and consequently a very fine fellow, as military men frequently speak, though in another sense. In such a case A cannot be bad, unless his tutor be either very wicked, or be in want of good motives to offer him, or bring to his view. But suppose A's tutor to be a necessarian by construction, with plenty of good and bad motives to offer him, yet the tutor himself does not know whether he can choose the good ones to offer or no, or whether he will not be impelled by necessity, to offer him all or most of the bad ones. In this case, poor A might become a very wicked and vicious boy for want of good motives being offered him, and what is worse, the tutor himself is blind as to what he will do, because he also is under the unavoidable influence and impulse of necessity, or however of some motives or things foreign to himself. Consequently, if A was my son, I would never have a tutor for him who was a necessarian, and under the unavoidable influence of necessity, without any power of self-determination, if I could possibly find a free agent to do the business. Dr. Priestley himself, as a necessarian, cannot tell me how or in what manner he would instruct and order my son, if put under his care, because he must do what necessity com-

pells him to do, having no will of his own, but what is under a foreign and necessary influence. And if he is to offer him good motives, or to give him good advice, and to persuade him to be virtuous, all this is to be done, and cannot, nor could not possibly have been otherwise; and if he is to act just the contrary, viz. to offer him bad motives, to give him bad advice, or to persuade him to be wicked, he is equally under necessity so to do, for it was all foreknown and could not possibly be otherwise; so that it is like an *equal chance* of a die thrown, whether the motives, advice, and persuasion he gives be good or bad, right or wrong, since one of them it must be; and I can form no idea of any thing being meant by the words, *equal chance*, besides this, viz. That some cause foreign to myself, (which cause I frequently know not) will, or will not, do a certain thing, whilst I have no more reason to believe that it will be done, than I have to believe that it will not be done. This is certainly the case with any one who is under the actual influence of necessity, and who is necessitated, and certainly foreknown before ever he was born to do every (the most minute) action that he will do, during his whole life. And yet he does not himself foreknow what he will do, or rather what he is to do. But Dr. Priestley may say he knows his own intentions when he acts as tutor. Granted. But he knows not what motives will come, and necessarily alter these intentions, nor yet how soon they may come. He allows himself to have no power of mind or body to determine against, or counteract any motives that may come, or may not come, for any thing he knows to the contrary. So that if he is one of the best of men to-day, he may by some unfortunate motive or motives be necessitated, or necessarily doomed to commit the most wicked and cruel action to-morrow, in spite of all he can do to the contrary, he having no power whatever within himself, exclusive of the certain and necessary action of motives. The result of the whole seems to be plainly this: if A is to be virtuous and happy, he is to be so upon the scheme of universal necessity, whether Dr. Priestley meddles with him at all or

or no; and if he is not to be virtuous and happy, neither Dr. Priestley, nor any other tutor, can with either *promises, or threatenings, or rewards, or punishments, however judiciously administered, make him so, because, upon the scheme of necessity, Dr. Priestley says, (page 8) "No event could have been otherwise, than "it has been, is, or is to be."* And again, (page 195) "Nothing could have been otherwise than it has been, "and every thing comes to pass in consequence of an "established constitution of things." Hence, getting a tutor to his son A, (if getting one can be avoided) must be wholly useless, because whatever A is to think, say, or do, in his whole life, must be done; because thinking, saying, and doing, are all events which must happen and cannot be otherwise, consequently there can be no room for care and anxiety about getting a proper tutor, or any other thing, as what is to be, must be, and *cannot be otherwise.* Let Dr. Priestley refine as much as he pleases, explain away the meaning of words as much as he pleases, and use as many words to confound and perplex as he pleases, yet this must be the ultimate meaning and result of what he has said, will say, or can say, unless he new model his scheme, and admit some other principle or cause of action, besides necessity, or necessarily influencing motives. I shall now proceed to B, the supposed free agent, and consider what may be done with him by way of instruction and discipline to make him virtuous and happy. "In my son B, says Dr. Priestley, (pages 74, 75) I have to do with a creature "of quite another make; motives have no necessary "or certain influence upon his determinations, and in "all cases where the principle of freedom from the "certain influence of motives takes place, it is exactly "an equal chance whether my promises or threatenings, "my rewards or punishments, determine his actions or "not. The self-determining power is not at all of the "nature of any mechanical influence, that may be counteracted by influences equally mechanical, but is a "thing with respect to which I can make no sort of calculation, and against which I can make no provision." It is admitted again by construction, that motives have

not a certain and necessary influence upon B's mind; and therefore it is exactly an equal chance, with regard to Dr. Priestley's guessing, whether his promises or threatenings, rewards or punishments, as motives, will take place to determine his mind to any one particular action or not, provided, that according to my definition of equal chance, he has no more reason to believe that he will act according to the motives, than he has to believe the contrary. But I allow motives to have some, and even a great influence upon his mind, to determine it to action, though they have not a certain, necessary, and uncontrollable one. And consequently there is much greater reason to believe that motives will determine him, than there is to believe the contrary, which makes the chance unequal, and the probability greater, that he will determine upon action according to motives, than the probability of the contrary is; yet this probability admits not of certainty; if it did, a man by knowing the motives presented to another, might foretel his future actions with certainty. Thus, if we once knew what motives a man had to do any certain action, we might thence know what appearance of things and motives to a future action, that action would produce, and thus we should be able certainly to foreknow the actions of such a man during his whole life, at least to foretel certainly his actions in many cases, where we know his disposition of mind and the appearance of things. It is on the scheme of probability only that we can with any propriety offer good motives, to induce B's choice, because on the scheme of necessity, as in A's mind, no choice at all can be made; neither from motives influencing nor otherwise, but what is to be and must come to pass; whereas, suppose B to be a free agent, and to have freedom of choice, and also that some motives are offered him to persuade or incline him to some good or bad action, they tend greatly to influence his mind, so that he will more probably act according to such influence; yet it is not certain that he will do so, because his mind can frequently, by its self-determining power, do contrary to the influence of motives, if inclining him to evil, and then he is com-

mend.

mendable and deserves a reward; or he can, by his self-determining power, easily comply with the motives, and co-operate with them, and then he is blamable and deserves punishment. Again, suppose motives incline his mind to what is good, it can and frequently does resist the influence of such motives, and act contrary to them, and then he deserves punishment; but it is more probable that he will comply and co-operate with such motives, and then he deserves a reward. These cases appear to me the only just foundations of praise or blame, of reward or punishment. And as Dr. Priestley observes, that this self-determining power is a thing, with respect to which he can make no sort of calculation, and against which he can make no provision; I would be glad to know in what manner a better calculation may be made how his necessary or his necessary motives will act? The actions to be produced by them are entirely out of my power to know or calculate; and what provision can I make against what I cannot know? And if I could know them, they must necessarily or of necessity come to pass, since every future event is necessarily and irrevocably fixt by a certain chain or decree of necessity, beyond my power, or all the united powers in the universe, to alter or change. In such a case, we can form no probable calculation of what A will do, and if we could, we cannot possibly make any provision against it, because it must inevitably be just so, and no otherwise. On the other hand, with regard to B, a free agent, the tutor offers him motives, advice, and persuasions to proper actions, according to which, if he wilfully and stubbornly refuse to act, he may severely punish him, and also inform him, that if he continue refusing to act according to the good motives, advice, and persuasions, he will be punished still more severely, because he might have done as he was advised and persuaded to do, being under no unavoidable necessity to do as he did, as A by construction was. Thus a provision may be made against the like being done in future, till at last a *general disposition to proper actions* may be formed in B's mind, as Dr. Priestley asserts a *stable habit of proper actions* may be done in A's (page 76). But that general disposition will not "ensure success," as Dr.

Priestley says his stable habit does in A,* but it ensures a very great probability of success. Whereas, I think, upon the scheme of necessity, we can never know, nor with probability even guess, whether a stable habit of virtue, when obtained, will continue or not, even for the shortest time imaginable, because we cannot tell whether it is under a certain necessity so to do or it is not. Dr. Priestley adds, (page 80) "When I, or the world at large praise my son, we tell him we admire his excellent disposition, in consequence of which all good motives have a certain and never failing influence upon his mind, always determining his choice to what is virtuous and honourable, and that his conduct is not directed either by mere will, or the authority of any other person, but proceeds from his own virtuous disposition only." Pray good Doctor, How came A by that virtuous disposition, for which you and the world praise him? It was an event which was to be and could not be otherwise; and though a virtuous disposition is certainly amiable, yet as A did not acquire it by his mere will, nor did in the least contribute to it, but was necessitated to have it, whether he would or no; he therefore no more deserves praise for it than a piece of marble does for being well polished. The marble is certainly more agreeable when polished, than when not so, yet as it did not polish itself, nor contribute to it, no praise is really due to the polished marble, but to the efficient cause which polished it. On the contrary, if A's disposition had been vicious, that also was an event equally necessary, so that he could not possibly be otherwise. How could he then be in the least to blame for being so? or how could he with propriety be punished for it? we may with equal propriety blame, and also punish a piece of marble (if it was capable of punishment) for being unpolished, though it could not possibly be otherwise. But I shall proceed to what Dr. Priestley

* If this be true, no person can be vicious, but through neglect of his parents or tutors, who did not form this stable habit, which would ensure success. What a pity that Dr. Priestley does not constantly employ himself in this business of making men virtuous and happy, since he is so sure to succeed.

says

says about B (page 81) "We have supposed that A has
 "done a virtuous action, and has been commended, be-
 "cause it proceeded from the bent of his mind to virtue,
 "so that whenever proper circumstances occurred, he ne-
 "cessarily did what he wished him to have done. Let
 "us now suppose that B does the very same thing; but
 "let it be fully understood, that the cause of his right
 "determination was not any bias or disposition of
 "mind in favour of virtue, or because a good motive
 "influenced him to do it; but that his determination
 "was produced by something within him (call it by
 "what you please) of a quite different nature, with re-
 "spect to which motives of any kind have no sort of
 "influence or effect, a mere arbitrary pleasure, without
 "any reason whatever (for a reason is a motive); and
 "I apprehend he would no more be thought a proper
 "subject of praise, notwithstanding he should do what
 "was right in itself, than the dice which by a fortunate
 "throw should give a man an estate. It is true the
 "action was right, but there was not the proper prin-
 "ciple, and motive, which are the only just foundations
 "of praise and blame." I have observed before that,
 "outward motives have a considerable degree of influence
 "on B's mind, as a free agent, but not an absolute, neces-
 "sary, and unavoidable one; and it may be here observed,
 "that a disposition of mind in favour of virtue, or a good
 "disposition, tends to influence B's mind to virtuous
 "actions, but yet not so necessarily and unavoidably, but
 "that by his self-determining power, acting at pleasure by
 "mere will, he can over-rule and overcome that good dis-
 "position, and act contrary to its influence. If he could
 "not possibly do so, he could not possibly with such a dis-
 "position commit sin nor do any thing amiss, con-
 "sequently he must be all good without any possibility of
 "doing evil. This is directly contrary to what St. Paul
 "and St. James say of all men, Rom. iii. 9. "We have
 "before proved, both Jews and Gentiles, that they are
 "all under sin." And verse 23, "All have sinned."
 "And James iii. 2, "In many things we offend all." I
 "allow that man generally acts according to the influence
 "of motives, or that he is generally induced by some
 reason

reason to act as he does in every thing. But I maintain at the same time, that man has a self-determining power of mind, which enables him to act in many things at pleasure, even contrary to inclining motives, or any foreign influence upon him, though I do admit that he does not always exert that power of acting contrary to motives. It is through this power alone that man can make any choice at all, as before observed. Upon the scheme of necessity, no choice whatever can be made, because when two things are presented, a man is necessitated to take one only, and can by no means take or choose the other. But Dr. Priestley asserts that a man who acts from a principle of self-determination, independent of motives, if he does what is right, it is a mere chance, and "he is no more a subject of praise than the dice which by a fortunate throw should give a man an estate." It appears to me very strange, to compare B, a supposed free agent, and consequently supposed able, by a self-determining power to do, or leave undone several things at pleasure, to dice, mere dead passive matter, which have no power to act or move, till first acted upon or moved. A, the necessarian, who is necessarily and unavoidably influenced or impelled by motives foreign to himself, may properly be compared to dice. The dice act absolutely, certainly, and necessarily, according to motives or foreign moving powers, without any probability of an inherent power in themselves to choose action, or non-action. The man who shakes the box is undoubtedly a motive or moving power to the dice. He (after shaking them) throws them upon the table, where they fall in some position or other; and what is usually called gravity (another motive or moving power) necessarily and certainly influences or impells the dice to rest upon some side according to the law of nature, * called gravity, acting on the dice, as they were situated at the moment

* By the law of nature, I mean what appears to be now established, without any interference of the Deity, or other free agent, interrupting it, which has sometimes been the case, and which extraordinary interference or interruption we term a miracle.

of contact with the table; so that if a man will tell me before he throws the die, how it will first strike the table, that is, with what velocity, with what point of the die, in what direction, and with what angle of inclination, I can with certainty foretel him on what side the die will rest, because it is certainly and necessarily influenced or impelled by a motive, or the moving power called gravity. With equal certainty could I foretel the action of a man certainly and necessarily influenced or impelled by some motive or moving power foreign to himself, provided I knew his situation, and the motive necessarily and certainly impelling him. Hence, every necessarian certainly and necessarily influenced and impelled by motives, appears to be exactly similar to a die thrown, which also is certainly and necessarily influenced and impelled by a motive or moving power, in such a manner that the very instant the die leaves the box, it can neither rest, nor do any other thing, otherwise than motives, gravity, or some foreign power, necessarily cause and impell it to do. Thus a necessarian, who is certainly and necessarily influenced and impelled by motives, without any inherent power of his own, to resist or overcome the action or influence of such motives, cannot, with any propriety, be maintained to be any way more commendable or blameable for what he does, than a die thrown out of the box, which is in an equal manner necessarily influenced and impelled by motives or moving powers, may be commended or blamed, for resting with any one side uppermost, when it could not do otherwise. Perhaps, indeed, the side eagerly wished for may be uppermost, but no praise or thanks can be due to the die, because it could not be otherwise done by it. Just so much praise and no more is due to A for having done a good action, which was to be done, in spite of himself, it being an event which could not possibly be otherwise. But suppose the die had a power of self-determination (such as B is supposed to have) to choose upon which side it would rest, in spite of gravity or the power of any motives influencing it to the contrary, and that then it chose to lay on the most favourable side for me, when it could have done otherwise, then

then I praise and thank it, or perhaps reward it, for fa-
 vouring me, when it was in its power to have equally fa-
 voured my adversary, and that for the same reason that
 I praise, thank, or reward B for doing a good and vir-
 tuous action, when he had it in his power to have done
 otherwise, and was also, perhaps, influenced by some
 bad motive to have done otherwise. But it may be
 urged that A acts voluntarily and freely, though neces-
 sarily, or that he has liberty to do what he does freely.
 Granted. Yet as observed by Dr. Priestley, out of Mr.
 Hobbes, (page 3) his liberty is only like "the liberty
 " which water has to descend freely," or the die to fall
 freely, and to rest freely when at rest. So that neither
 A, the necessarian, nor the water, nor the die, (all upon
 a par) could possibly do otherwise than they respectively
 did. Dr. Priestley adds, (pages 84, 85) "If my child
 " A acts wrong, I tell him that I am exceedingly dis-
 " pleased, because he has shown a disposition of mind
 " on which motives to virtue have no sufficient in-
 " fluence, that he appears to have such a propensity to
 " vicious indulgences, that I am afraid he is irreclaim-
 " able, and that his utter ruin will be the consequence
 " of it. This is the proper language of blame; and
 " upon a mind constituted like that of A, may have a
 " good effect, as well as the discipline of punishment."
 I confess I can see no kind of propriety in blaming A,
 nor can I conceive any good effect that is possible to be
 obtained by punishing him. Suppose I was A, I would
 answer my father and tutor thus (*if necessity would per-
 mit me*): I am extremely sorry, my dear father, that
 you are displeased, and I must beg leave to observe, that
 you are to blame for your displeasure against me. It is
 very true, "I have shown a disposition of mind, on
 " which motives to virtue have no sufficient influence,"
 but that disposition of mind which I have shown, and
 which I now have, is an event that could not possibly
 have been otherwise, I could neither prevent nor in the
 least alter it, and therefore why should I be blamed, or
 why should you be displeased at me for the same? It is
 likewise true, that I have a propensity to vicious indul-
 gences, but as that also is an event which could not possibly
 have

have been otherwise; I am equally blameless for that, as for my bad disposition of mind. I also, my dear father, "am afraid that I am irreclaimable, and that utter ruin "will be the consequence of it." I fear this to be sure; but what is worse, if it is to be so, it must of necessity be so. If I am to be utterly ruined, it is an event which must necessarily happen, so that neither I nor all the powers in the universe can alter or prevent it. And therefore, my dear father, do not blame or punish me for what I never could possibly avoid, but rather pity me, who am so unfortunate, as to be certainly and necessarily doomed to have such a bad disposition, and such a vicious propensity as I fear will utterly undo me. But Dr. Priestley says, (page 85) "If B has acted the "same part, that A has done, the language that I addressed to A, will not apply to him. It is true, he has "done what is wrong, and it must have bad consequences; but it was not from any bad disposition of "mind that made him subject to be influenced by bad "impressions. No, his determination had a cause of "quite another nature. It was a choice directed by no "bad motive whatever, but a mere will acting independently of any motive; and which, though it has "been on the side of vice to-day, may be on the side of "virtue to-morrow. My blame or reproaches, therefore, "being ill founded, and incapable of having any effect, "it is my wisdom to withhold them, and wait the uncertain issue with patience."

The language which ought to be addressed to B, is not materially different from what was addressed by Dr. Priestley to A. I would address him thus: "I am exceedingly displeased, because you had it in your "power to choose virtue or vice, and you have chosen "vice; you therefore appear to me to have a bad disposition, and a propensity to vicious indulgences, and "at the same time will not exert your self-determining "power, to over-rule that bad disposition, and to restrain that propensity, by acting contrary to what they "induce you to do, though you have a power in your "self so to do. If you continue to act thus, you will "be utterly ruined. In order then to reclaim you, I "will

" will punish you severely for what you have done
 " amiss, and I will continue so to do every time you
 " do amiss, until you exert that power which you
 " have of 'ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well';
 " for you were not certainly and unavoidably necessi-
 " tated to have done what you have done, as your bro-
 " ther A was. You have a power to choose, and there-
 " fore I will punish you when you choose wrong."
 But Dr. Priestley observes, that " though B has been on
 " the side of vice to-day, he may be on the side of vir-
 " tue to-morrow." Very right; and that is the true
 reason why he should be punished and corrected, be-
 cause a change may be made from vice to virtue. If no
 change can possibly be made, but that he must necessa-
 rily be what he is, and cannot possibly be changed or
 made otherwise, to what good end or purpose can cor-
 rection or punishment be used? I can conceive no other
 end but to produce a change from being vicious to-day
 to being virtuous to-morrow, or at some future time.
 Upon the whole, I solemnly declare, that I can form no
 idea at present of any just reason for rewards or punish-
 ments, praise or blame, upon any other principles than
 those of free agency and self-determination.

SECTION VIII.

How far Men's general Conduct will be
 influenced by the Belief of the Doctrine
 of Necessity.

DR. PRIESTLEY begins this Section thus: " It is
 " imagined by some, that the apprehension of
 " all the actions of men depending upon motives which
 " necessarily influence their determinations, so that no

" action or event could possibly be otherwise than it has
 " been, is, or is to be, would make men indifferent
 " with respect to their conduct, or to what befalls them
 " in life. I answer, so it would, if their own actions
 " and determinations were not necessary links in this
 " chain of causes and events; and if their good or bad
 " success, did not, in the strictest sense of the word, de-
 " pend upon themselves." I can very well conceive
 upon the scheme of necessity, why all men may not be
 indifferent with respect to their conduct, because indif-
 ference itself, where it is, is also a necessary link in the
 chain of events, and it could not possibly be otherwise.
 If the chain is so constructed, that it is one necessary
 link, that I must be anxious about my conduct in life, I
 must necessarily be so; but if indifference about my
 conduct is a necessary link, I must necessarily be indif-
 ferent; so that I cannot possibly be either more anxious
 or more indifferent about my own conduct, than I was
 ordained, fore-known, and necessitated to be, long be-
 fore I was born: But I can form no idea, nor any kind
 of conception, how a man's good or bad success in the
 strictest sense of the word, depends upon himself, on
 the scheme of necessity. Upon that scheme, my good
 or bad success in life, and even in the most trivial
 thing in life, was an event which was to be, and could
 not possibly be otherwise. It was decreed long before
 I was born, as a necessary link of the chain of causes
 and events, and certainly foreknown before the founda-
 tion of the world, to be exactly so in every respect,
 as it has come to pass, or shall come to pass, to the end
 of my life. How then can my good or bad success in
 any sense depend upon myself, when neither I nor any
 other thing can possibly reverse the decree, or alter it
 in the least from what it is to be? I was not in being
 when the chain and every link thereof, and my success
 amongst other links, was fabricated, and irrevocably
 made and fixed. What have I then to do with it, or
 even with any thing in the world, save as a mere passive
 instrument necessarily made and determined in every ac-
 tion, by necessity or something foreign to myself? But
 Dr. Priestley says, (page 98) " all this may perhaps be
 I " made

" made more intelligible by an example. I shall there-
 " fore endeavour to give one. No man entertains a
 " doubt, but that every thing relating to vegetation is
 " subject to the established laws of nature; and sup-
 " posing this to be the case, with respect to the human
 " mind and its operations, a being of perfect intelli-
 " gences and foresight, will know how we shall be pro-
 " vided for the next year; so that in fact our provision
 " for the next year, and all the events of it, are abso-
 " lutely fixed, and nothing can interfere to make it
 " otherwise than it is to be. But will any farmer, be-
 " lieving this ever so firmly, neglect, on this account
 " to sow his fields, and content himself with saying,
 " God knows how I shall be provided for the next year?
 " I cannot change his decree, and let his will be done.
 " We see in fact that such a persuasion never operates
 " in this manner; because, though the chain of events
 " is necessary, our determinations and actions are ne-
 " cessary links of that chain. This gives the farmer
 " the fullest assurance, that if it be decreed for him to
 " starve, it is likewise decreed for him to neglect to
 " sow his fields; but if he do sow his fields, which de-
 " pends entirely upon himself, that then, since the laws
 " of nature are invariable, it will be evident, that no
 " such unfavourable decree had gone forth." I cannot
 see how this example makes the matter any more intel-
 ligible at all. If " our provision for the next year and
 " all the events of it are *absolutely fixed*, and *nothing*
 " *can interfere to make it otherwise than it is to be*,"
 I can clearly conceive upon this supposition, why the
 farmer does not always neglect to sow his fields, and
 leave all to God's certain providence and fixed decrees,
 because his plowing, sowing, &c. are events which
 are absolutely fixed, and therefore he could not pos-
 sibly avoid plowing, sowing, &c. or he could not
 possibly do otherwise: So that as Dr. Priestley says,
 this persuasion of all events being certainly, absolutely,
 and irrevocably fixed and decreed (if this be true) can
 never operate so as to make the farmer more indifferent
 than he otherwise would be, because that very degree of
 indifference, which he is to have, is also absolutely fixed.
 But how the latter part of Dr. Priestley's words last
 cited,

cited, can also be true, according to his own doctrine, I cannot imagine; that is, how the farmer's sowing his fields, &c. can "depend entirely upon himself." The farmer's either will sow his fields or he will not. If he will and does sow them, upon the plan of necessity, it was "an event absolutely fixed, and nothing (not even "himself) could interfere to make it otherwise than it "was and is to be." If he will not and does not sow his fields; this was also an event absolutely fixed, which nothing could interfere to make otherwise; or, in other words, it was irrevocably decreed and absolutely fixed that he should not sow them. In either case, How could the sowing or not sowing depend upon himself? By some means or another the farmer was absolutely decreed and necessitated to do one, and one only, without any possibility whatever of doing the other. Because if he could possibly have done the other, the one he did do, could neither be certainly foreknown nor absolutely fixed, nor depend upon himself any further than as a passive instrument, necessarily depending upon some other necessary cause for action. No one event can be certainly fore-known or absolutely fixed, unless it either now actually exist, or exist by some necessary producing cause, that is such a cause as now exists, and will necessarily produce it at some future time, either by itself or some other intermediate cause or causes. The same contradiction appears in page 99 of Dr. Priestley's philosophical necessity, where he asserts that "in fact, the system of necessity makes every "man the maker of his own fortune." I cannot apprehend how a man can be said to make his own fortune, when it was absolutely fixed, so that nothing could interfere to make it otherwise, long before he was born, at least I cannot conceive how he may be said to make it in any other sense, than the knife may be said to be the maker of a pen, when it is absolutely compelled and necessitated to make it, by man a cause foreign to itself. If this be all, though I be the maker of my own fortune, I cannot however alter or amend that fortune in the least from what it was, and is, certainly and irrevocably fixed to be. I have in this case

no more the making of my own fortune, than the knife has the making of the pen, or a hammer the making of a nail, when they are both necessarily compelled to do, by some foreign efficient cause. In the remaining part of this section Dr. Priestley speaks concerning the nature of prayer upon the scheme of necessity; but I have shown before in page 64, that prayer cannot possibly answer any good end upon that scheme, because every future action and event of every kind is already fixed and decreed, so that it cannot possibly be otherwise, let a man pray as much and as fervently as he pleases. I shall not therefore here repeat what I have before said, but will proceed to the ninth Section.

SECTION IX.

Of the Moral Influence of the Doctrine of Necessity.

DR. Priestley says, (page 109), "The full persuasion that nothing can come to pass without the knowledge, and express appointment of the greatest and best of Beings must tend to diffuse a joyful serenity over the mind, producing a conviction, that, notwithstanding all unfavourable appearances *whatever is, is right*; that even all evils respecting individuals or societies, *any part, or the whole of the human race, will terminate in good*; and that the *greatest sum of good* could not in the nature of things *be attained by any other means.*" If these words of Dr. Priestley be true, I cannot conceive, how there can possibly be any wrong or evil in the universe, because every thing that is, (without any exception whatever) is right. Then there can be nothing wrong, at least not wrong according to the common acceptation of the word. Besides, *all evils*, (without any exception again) respecting individuals or societies, *any part or the whole*

whole of the human race, will end in good, and are working out the greatest sum of good, without which evil, so great a sum, or so much good could not by any other means be attained. Certainly then there is no evil existing. If that action or event, which very wise and learned men have hitherto imprudently called evil or wrong, tends to produce the greatest good possible, and if that very action was omitted, or that event had not come to pass, the greatest good could not possibly have been attained by any other means: I say, if this be true, every adultery, incest, robbery, and even the most cruel murder is right; and the man who commits all or any of these crimes (as I call them) is doing what is right, and consequently his duty, as much as the most pious and virtuous man upon the earth. Nay if he did not commit them, the greatest sum of good could not be attained by any other means. Consequently as these actions (I call them crimes) are working out the greatest sum of good, which cannot be attained by any other means, if the man was not necessitated to do them, they would be meritorious in him. However a man is as much doing his duty, and equally executing the will and appointment of God, which he is necessitated to do, when he commits the wickedest action, or what we imprudently call so, as when he is doing the most virtuous one. A man is equally necessitated to do both upon the scheme of necessity, and which so ever he does, he is equally promoting the greatest possible good. It appears to be something like the acting of a play, where some act high and some act low parts, but every part is equally necessary to be acted in order to complete the whole, and the actor of every part, high or low, is equally meritorious, provided he acts his part well. So in the whole of my life, I only act the part appointed me, and which I am necessitated to do, and that also in the very manner I do act it, whether well or ill, without any possibility of doing otherwise. Besides, whatever I do is right and tends to produce the greatest possible good, which could not be attained by any other means, than by my doing those very actions which I do, however wicked or mischievous. A comfortable doctrine indeed,

deed, to the man "who draws iniquity with cords of
 "vanity and sins as it were with a cart-rope,"* or to him
 who continues with an high hand to add sin unto sin!
 How wrong must Solomon have been in his advice; If
 "sinners entice thee consent thou not: If they say, come
 "with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk
 "privily for the innocent without cause. Let us
 "swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole as
 "them that go down into the pit."† Upon Dr.
 Priestley's plan, he should have said; If sinners
 entice thee as above, and thou consentest and dost so,
 it is all right, and will be a means of attaining the
 greatest good, which cannot be attained by any other
 means. This being the case, Dr. Priestley may well
 say, (as in pages 109, 110) That, "the full per-
 "suasion of this great and invaluable truth, (is) the only
 "sure anchor of the soul in a time of adversity and
 "distress, and a never failing source of consolation un-
 "der the most gloomy prospects. Upon any other
 "hypothesis, it will be believed that many things, in
 "which the independent uncontrolled determinations of
 "fallible men take place are continually going wrong,
 "and that much actual evil, unconnected with, and un-
 "productive of, good, does exist." Very true! a con-
 stant and never failing source of consolation under the
 most gloomy prospects indeed! The most gloomy pro-
 spect a reasonable man can possibly have in this life, is
 a continued life of sin and consummate wickedness;
 yet even under this most gloomy prospect, there is a
 never failing comfort, a belief and full persuasion, that
 whatever he does or has done (however wicked) is right
 and not wrong, and that it is the best thing that could
 have been done, by means of which the *greatest sum of*
good will be attained, which could not have been attained
by any other means, so that things would have been
 worse, and would have fallen short of the greatest good,
 if he had not acted so wicked a part; besides this, he
 was necessitated to act as he did, and *could not possibly*
do otherwise. In short, if this be the case, men cannot
 do wrong, because every thing *is right*, neither can

* Isaiah vi. 16. † Proverbs i. 10, 11, 12.

actual evil exist, which is *unproductive of good*; and even the *greatest good*. Hence, I cannot with any propriety repent or be sorry for any thing I have done, because if I be, I am sorry for having done, what must have been done in order to attain the greatest good, and consequently I am sorry that there is so much good attained or produced. Upon Dr. Priestley's plan, nothing is absolutely and really evil. He says, (page 110) In "the eye of a necessarian, the idea of *real absolute evil* wholly disappears." I congratulate Dr. Priestley upon the discovery of so happy a world without any idea of *real absolute evil*. A never failing source of comfort truly, in the most gloomy prospects, in the midst of robberies, murders, &c. which I had almost called cruel and bloody crimes. But Dr. Priestley adds, (page 111) "With such sublime views of the system, and of the author of it, as these, vice is absolutely incompatible; and more especially hatred, envy, and malice are excluded. I cannot as a necessarian hate any man; because I consider him as *being in all respects, just what God has made him to be*, and also was doing, with respect to me, nothing but what *he was expressly designed, and appointed to do*; God being the *only cause*, and men nothing more than the *instruments in his hands*, to execute all his pleasure." It appears clear to me that in a world, constructed upon Dr. Priestley's plan, that vice is not only *absolutely incompatible*, but *absolutely impossible*. Vice (as generally understood) implies a fault, blemish, or defect. But, says Dr. Priestley *whatever is, is right*, consequently there is no wrong. Every thing whatever, as well what we call vice, as all others, tends to the attainment of the *greatest sum of good* and perfection, consequently there cannot possibly be any fault, blemish, or defect, because these imply something wrong, bad, or imperfect, but yet wherever they appear, they are good, and the greatest sum of good could not be attained in the nature of things by any other means, consequently without those very things which we have usually called vices, faults, or defects, which have already come to pass, or ever shall come to pass, the greatest good could not have been

attained, but must have been diminished and less than it is and will be, so that the want of them, would have been a vice or defect of good, nay even a diminution of the greatest good. It does not at all mend the matter to say, what perhaps may be said, that vice is nothing positive, but only a defect or absence of virtue. Granting this, What is the consequence? This defect or this absence of virtue is an event equally necessary in the nature of things, to attain the greatest sum of good, and consequently equally good and beneficial with virtue itself. Virtue cannot tend to attain a greater sum of good than the greatest, but vice, as an (evil and *all other evils*, says Dr. Priestley, (page 109) as before observed) does this, neither can the greatest sum of good be attained by any other means. Consequently, virtue can be no better than vice itself is. This certainly justifies Dr. Priestley in saying as above, "I cannot, as a necessarian, hate any man, because I consider him as being, in all respects just what God has made him to be, (no matter how wicked or vicious, God made him just so) and doing also as with respect to me, *nothing* but what he *was expressly designed, and appointed to do.*" Certainly, if so, I cannot with any propriety hate or dislike any man for any action he does to me, even though he should break my legs and arms, rob my house and burn it, and also murder my wife and children, still I ought not to hate or dislike himself or his actions; not himself, because he did nothing, but what he was expressly designed and appointed to do, God (says Dr. Priestley) *being the only cause*, and man *nothing more than an instrument in his hands* to execute his pleasure in all these actions, (which I call cruel and barbarous); so that it is the very same to him, a mere passive instrument, as if he had been doing the most virtuous actions; neither ought I to hate or dislike these actions, for they are only necessary events which were to be, and could not possibly be otherwise, and what is more, they are producing the greatest good. In such a case, I have no more reason to be displeased at, or angry with, the man, an instrument in God's hands, expressly designed and appointed so to do, than I have to be displeased at, or angry with, the pistol, sword, or other inanimate instrument used in the bloody business.

business. Moreover, I cannot with propriety be displeased at, or angry with, the man's bad disposition of mind, because he is a being *in all respects* (consequently in disposition of mind) *just what God has made him to be*, and *he could not be otherwise*, nor do otherwise, than he has done and continues to do. This consideration naturally extinguishes every reason for hatred, malice, displeasure, or anger, as well as every reason for love, respect, or gratitude to any man, for any beneficial service or good action performed to me, because man is only a necessary instrument in God's hands, to act as he is expressly designed and appointed to do, and not otherwise, being thus reduced to a mere machine, necessarily and unavoidably impelled to every action which he does, whether good or bad. This sufficiently accounts for some part of Dr. Priestley's words, (page 112) "If, as a necessarian, (says he) I cease to blame men for their vices in the ultimate sense of the word, though, in the common and proper sense of it, I continue to do so as much as other persons; (for how necessarily so ever they act, they are influenced by a base and mischievous disposition of mind, against which I must guard myself and others, in proportion as I love myself and others) I, on my system, cannot help viewing them with a tenderness and compassion, that will have an infinitely finer and happier effect; as it must make me more earnest and unwearied in my endeavours to reclaim them, without suffering myself to be offended, and desist from my labour through provocation, disgust, or despair." As a necessarian, as before observed, Dr. Priestley cannot properly either blame or be displeased at men for their vices, unless he be necessitated so to do. Yet it seems to him as if they were in some measure blameable, if not for their vices, at least for their base and mischievous dispositions of mind. But to use his own words, men are *in all respects* (consequently in dispositions of mind) *just what God made them to be*, therefore he has no more just reason to be angry with any man, because he has a base and mischievous disposition of mind, than he has to be angry with another, because he has a hunch back or a club foot.

foot. Since in *all respects*, both in body and mind, as well as in all other respects, every man is, according to Dr. Priestley, just what God has made him to be. And to what possible purpose can Dr. Priestley endeavour to guard himself and others, against such a base and mischievous disposition of mind? The man upon his plan, however base and mischievous in disposition, can do no one thing, but what, as an instrument in God's hand, he was expressly designed and appointed to do. Not one tittle more or less than this, can he possibly do, how much soever Dr. Priestley and others may be guarded against it, or how much soever they may be unguarded. On the Doctor's system, I will allow that it is my duty to view all others, with *tenderness and compassion*, provided I have power so to do; nay, I ought to view the man so, who is lifting the knife to cut my throat, because he is only going to do what he is expressly designed, appointed, and necessitated to do. But the great misfortune is, that the very degree of tenderness and compassion which I am to have, as in this, so in every other moment of my life, is an event equally necessary and unavoidable, and out of my power to increase or diminish in the least. Neither can I conceive how this view of the necessarian system can any way make me, as a necessarian, *more earnest and unwearied in my endeavours to reclaim them*, (who are of base and mischievous dispositions) without desisting through provocation, disgust, or despair. Because, these are all events in my life, which were so necessarily settled and irrevocably fixed before I was born, that they cannot be otherwise than they are to be. Upon the scheme of necessity, I have not the least power either to persist in my endeavours to reclaim them, through tenderness and compassion, or to desist through provocation, disgust, or despair, any further, or in any other way, than I am necessitated to do. Therefore I need not trouble myself about it in the least, any further than what I cannot possibly avoid. "The natures of the most vicious of mankind" (says Dr. Priestley, page 113) being the same with my own, they are as improveable as mine, and whatever "their disposition be at present, it is capable of being
" changed

" changed for the better, by means naturally adapted to
 " that end." This may be true; but, upon the necessa-
 rian system, the most vicious natures cannot be im-
 proved, if they are not to be so; and if they are to be
 so, they must be improved, and cannot be otherwise.
 The same holds good with regard to a vicious nature
 being changed for the better. The question is not whe-
 ther it is improveable or not, or whether it is or is not
 capable of being changed for the better, but whether it
 is ordered, appointed, and decreed so, that it must be
 improved and changed for the better, or it must not? If
 it is to be so, or must be so, then it is not only im-
 proveable, and capable of being changed, but it will
 actually be so by some means or other, at the time cer-
 tainly appointed for that purpose, because in this case
 the improvement and change are events which must be,
 and cannot possibly be otherwise. On the contrary, if
 it is not designed and appointed to be improved or
 changed for the better, it cannot possibly be so. In such
 a case, it is not improveable, nor capable of being im-
 proved or changed for the better by any means what-
 ever, because in such a case, the improvement and
 change are events which are not to be, nor can possibly
 be. All that I have said in this Section appears
 to me exceedingly clear and plain from the necessarian
 doctrine. Considering then the above consequences
 to follow the doctrine of necessity, I leave the reader to
 judge concerning the truth and propriety of Dr. Priest-
 ley's conclusion of this Section (page 114). " As far
 " as these great and just views of things can be enter-
 " tained and indulged, they have the happiest effect
 " upon the mind." I solemnly declare, that if I was
 fully convinced of the truth of the system of necessity,
 in that extensive and unlimited manner Dr. Priestley has
 described it, it would be so far from having a most
 happy effect upon my mind, that it would make me
 either wholly indifferent about every action and event in
 life, or it would make me continually fearful and ap-
 prehensive of some very great evil being decreed neces-
 sarily and unavoidably to befall me, which I could not
 possibly avoid, nor in the least guard against or ward off;
 provided

provided, nevertheless, that my indifference and fear were not likewise so limited that I could not possibly have more or less than I have had, have, and am unavoidably and necessarily doomed to have, during the whole of my existence.

SECTION X.

In what Sense God may be considered as the Author of Sin, and of the Objection to the Doctrine of Necessity, on that Account.

DR. PRIESTLEY in this Section, expressly asserts God to be the author of sin, as indeed he must do, if he intends his system of Philosophical Necessity to be in any measure a consistent system. All that ever have been professed Necessitarians before him, and have denied this, have so far always contradicted themselves, and have overthrown what they endeavoured to support. But Dr. Priestley consistently with his scheme of necessity, says (page 117) “our supposing that *God is the author of sin* (as upon the scheme of necessity he must in fact, be the author of all things) by no means implies that he is a sinful being, for it is the disposition of mind, and the design that constitutes the sinfulness of an action. If, therefore his disposition and design be good, what he does is morally good.” It sounds a little strange in my ears, that the disposition and design of God should be good, and yet that he should be the *author of sin* or evil, or that he should be the *only cause* of sin and evil in order to effect that good design. It appears to me as if he was either mistaken, and caused evil when he designed what was good; or else that he was impotent, and had not power to effect that good he designed, without using sin or evil as a necessary means; or in other words, doing evil that good may come, which

which is what St. Paul speaks against (Rom. iii. 8.) with some warmth, even when affirmed of the Christians, without affirming it of God, a perfect and righteous Being, who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and who cannot look on iniquity,"* that is, to behold evil and look upon iniquity with pleasure and approbation, much less then can he be *the author and only cause* of sin, evil, and iniquity, and man when he commits them, only an instrument in his hands.

An Almighty Being can surely effect the greatest good, without using any means but what is good: And if that Almighty Power be accompanied with infinite goodness, such a being will certainly never do evil that good may come, which even St. Paul abhorred the thoughts of being charged with, as before noticed. And as a further reason, why God will not do so, he cannot want power to produce the same good, by means altogether good. But here it may be urged, that nothing is evil in itself, not even murder, where it tends ultimately to produce the greatest sum of good. Granting this, all possibility of evil on Dr. Priestley's plan is taken away, because every thing, however evil, tends to produce the greatest good. Hence, nothing upon his plan is evil in itself. Besides, I cannot conceive how God who is *the author and only cause of all things*, and consequently of sin and evil, whilst *man is nothing more than the instrument* in his hands, can be any way cleared or acquitted of the actual commission of sin, any more than man, a free agent, on the system of free agency, may be cleared and acquitted of any murder committed by him, as the only cause, and the blame or fault be wholly imputed to the knife, or other instrument in his hands, used in the murder. But Dr. Priestley introduces an example, (page 117). "It was" (says he) wicked in Joseph's brethren to sell him into "Egypt, because they acted from envy, hatred, and "covetousness; but it was not wicked in God to ordain "it to be so; because, in appointing it he was not "actuated by any such principle. In him it was gra-

* Habbakuk i. 13.

"cious and good, because he did it, as we read, to
 "preserve life, and to answer other great and excellent
 "purposes in the extensive plan of his providence." If
 this business was sinful and wicked, and yet was or-
 dained by God as the author and only cause to be neces-
 sarily done, whilst Joseph's brethren were only the instru-
 ments in God's hands, and could not possibly avoid
 acting just as they did; I say, if this was the case, cer-
 tainly no other being besides God can be properly
 charged with the business (whether wicked or righteous)
 because he was the only cause and by some means neces-
 sitated it to be so. It seems very strange also to assert, that
 an action may be righteous, gracious, and good, con-
 sidered as to the author and only cause, which alone
 caused it to be done just as it was done, and yet wicked
 in the instrument used to do the action, though it was
 necessitated to do it, and could not possibly do otherwise.
 These are subtle discoveries indeed, far beyond my
 capacity to have discovered, nay, even beyond it to
 comprehend when discovered! If the business was
 wicked, certainly the cause (and not the instrument ne-
 cessarily ordained and appointed by the cause unavoid-
 ably to do it) must alone be culpable. If the business
 was not wicked, but *gracious and good*, and done to
preserve life, neither cause nor instrument can be
 blameable for having done what is *gracious and good*,
 and what has answered great and excellent purposes.
 But, it is said, that Joseph's brethren acted from envy,
 hatred, and covetousness. Admitting this; these dis-
 positions in them, at that time, were necessary events,
 and certainly fore-known before they were born,
 and which could not possibly be otherwise, and there-
 fore they were no more blameable in that case for be-
 ing envious, hateful, or covetous, than the murdering
 knife is for being sharp or blunt. With submission to
 Dr. Priestley, is it not more probable that Joseph's
 brethren, free and self-determining agents, influenced
 and biased by envy, hatred, and covetousness, yielded
 to such influence and bias (though they might have re-
 sisted and overcome them, as not being irresistible and
 insuperable) and sold him into Egypt? If so, it was a
 wicked

wicked and sinful action in them, to yield to their bad dispositions of mind, which they were not necessitated to do. However, after this was done by them, the Almighty God, who is never the immediate author or cause of sin by himself, or any instrument necessarily impelled by him to do it; but who frequently brings good out of evil, and turns wickedness after it is committed by his over-ruling power, so as to work out some wise and excellent purposes, enabled Joseph (after being thus wickedly sold) by a supernatural power, to interpret Pharaoh's dream, and so to become a particular favourite of Pharaoh. Thus Joseph being wickedly sent into Egypt by his brethren, God afterwards enabled him to obtain favour of Pharaoh, by interpreting his dream, which was the means of preserving the lives, not only of the Egyptians, but also of Jacob and his sons during a long famine, which God had pre-determined to send upon the land, for he fore-knew and had fore-told that seven years of famine should arise in the land; because, (says Joseph) * "The thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass." But there is yet another thing to be considered, which is, that although Joseph's brethren seem to have been determined upon wickedness, and to slay their brother; and accordingly with that view had cast him into a pit; yet, just then, a company of Ishmaelite merchants were passing by. Now, might not these merchants be ordered by a particular providence of God, to pass by at that time? And when Joseph's brethren saw them, it would, and did remind them that they might make money of him; and accordingly, they sold him to the merchants for twenty pieces of silver. Joseph might then very properly say in one sense, "God did send me before you to preserve life." Though God was not the author and only cause of their cruel and bloody designs to murder him; yet by thus providentially ordering the merchants at that time to pass by, he might be the actual cause of his being sold into Egypt, and yet without sin; because by so doing, he preserved Joseph's life, as well as the

* Gen. xli. 31.

lives of his father and brethren afterwards. It should be here observed, that I always maintain that God sometimes interposes and secretly influences man; nay, that he sometimes, perhaps necessarily, impells a man to several actions; but when he does this, it is to do what is righteous and good, or at least to do better than what they would naturally do of themselves, by their own will or self-determining power; but I also maintain, that God never irresistibly and necessarily impells any man, nor even secretly influences him to do any sin or wickedness, although he frequently leaves him to act at pleasure, according to his self-determining power, without any particular interference of God, necessity, or any thing foreign to himself; and hence arises all sin and wickedness amongst mankind. But Dr. Priestley, as an excuse for God being the author or only cause of sin, says, (page 118), "That God might have made all men sinless, and happy, might, for any thing that we know, have been as impossible, as his making them not finite, but infinite beings, in all respects equal to himself." I cannot say what might be impossible to Dr. Priestley's God, who appears to be so tied down by necessity, as to have necessarily made all things just as they are, and are to be, and to have produced all events, just as they have been, are, and are to be, without any possibility of their being otherwise *. To me it not only appears possible for God to have made all men sinless or without sin, and consequently happy, but even to be inconsistent with an almighty, good, and perfect God, to have made them otherwise. All sin implies a defect and imperfection. If then God could not make all men sinless, he had not power to do so; consequently, he is not almighty, but impotent. An almighty, good, and perfect being, both could and would certainly produce at first, a good, sinless, and perfect work. And accordingly, we find, after God had made all things, † "He saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good." If then very good, it was certainly perfect in its kind,

* See Philosoph. Necessity, page 96.

† Gen. i. 31.

and sinless or without sin, for sin is evil and bad. As to man in particular, verse 27th, "God created him in his own image, in the image of God created he him."

Now let us consider in what this image of God, in which man was at first created, consists. In some sense it consists in his intellectual faculties, his free agency, or self-determining power, and his dominion over the other creatures; for I believe Dr. Priestley will allow God to be an intelligent being, a free agent, a self-determining being, and to have dominion over all his creatures. But this is not all that is meant by man being created in the image of God, because all these remain in man after the fall, corruption, and degeneracy of human nature, in consequence of Adam's transgression when he was in paradise. Man was at first created in the image of God, in a higher sense, that is, in righteousness and true holiness. According to St. Paul, "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness *," that is, according to, or after the image of, God. And again: "Put on the new man, which is created in knowledge, after the image of him that created him †" We have in these places the image of God consisting in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, in which Adam was created, and which was peculiar to the first man before he fell, when God saw him, and behold he was very good. He was then righteous and holy, truly innocent, and sinless, or without sin; but he lost these good qualities by his sin in disobeying God's command. In the verses before ‡, the Ephesians are exhorted to "put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and to be renewed in the spirit of their mind." Now to be renewed plainly signifies to be made again in the same manner as we once were, but now are not, that is, as follows, "to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness §." The word *renew* is frequently used in this sense in scripture, particularly Hebrews vi. 6,

* Ephesians iv. 24.

† Ephesians iv. 22, 23.

‡ Colossians iii. 10.

§ Ephesians ix. 24.

“and if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto
 “repentance.” Nay indeed it is the general meaning
 of the word, as it naturally implies something lost,
 which is again to be recovered or renewed. From the
 Mosaic account of the creation thus compared with the
 words of St. Paul, it plainly appears that man was
 created very good, after the image of God, in righteous-
 ness and true holiness, and consequently sinless, or
 without sin; for God, as before observed, is “of purer
 “eyes than to behold evil, and look on iniquity*,” and
 therefore could not have seen Adam after he was made,
 and have pronounced him very good, if he had not been
 so, and consequently sinless. Man being thus created,
 the query is, Whether God, or necessity, by some fixed
 law, or irrevocable decree, or by some other way, im-
 pelled him or necessitated him to sin, so that he could
 not possibly do otherwise, in order to work out the
*greatest sum of good, which could not be attained by
 any other means?* We find God Almighty gave a com-
 mand to the man that he had created in his own image,
 and that he had pronounced very good, or he laid an in-
 junction upon him in these words: “Of every tree of the
 “garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of know-
 “ledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in
 “the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”
 Here is not the least appearance of Adam being decreed
 or necessitated by any thing whatever to eat this for-
 bidden fruit; on the contrary, Almighty God strictly
 commands and enjoins him not to eat, at the same time
 denouncing a heavy punishment to be inflicted upon him
 if he did eat. This certainly implies that Adam had
 a power of self-determination within him, enabling
 him either to obey or disobey, to eat or not to eat the
 forbidden fruit. And to what purpose could this solemn
 charge and serious denunciation of punishment be,
 if he did eat thereof, provided God either certainly
 and absolutely fore-knew he would eat, or if he was ne-
 cessitated so to do, and could not possibly do otherwise?
 In either case, God, whom we believe to be a most

* Habakkuk i. 13. † Genesis ii. 16, 17.

merciful God, appears to be cruelly insulting, and bitterly mocking the man he had just created, by commanding him to avoid what he could not possibly avoid, and at the same time threatening him with a severe punishment if he did not avoid it. This represents God in no amiable view. Now let us consider this on the principles of free agency. On these principles, Adam alone is to blame if he eats what is forbidden, because God, according to his merciful and compassionate nature, forewarns Adam of the dismal consequence of eating, in order to restrain him from so doing; but, notwithstanding, he leaves him at full liberty to eat or not to eat. If Adam transgressed this commandment thus given by God, the Sovereign of the universe, it was disobedience in him to his God and Creator, and consequently sin. Now if God necessitated Adam thus to disobey and transgress, and was the *only cause* of such disobedience, and Adam only the *instrument in his hands*, then certainly God was the author and only cause of the sin, but if Adam disobeyed by his self-determining power* acting by mere will, and might or could have done otherwise, then it was Adam's sin only. And if we believe St. Paul,† by one man sin entered into the world; hence, then the one man Adam, and not God, was the author of sin, because by him as the active cause, (and not by God), it entered into the world. So likewise it is ever since with all other sins; they enter by men into the world, as the active causes thereof, and not as mere passive instruments. As Solomon says, "God hath made man upright, but they have sought out *many inventions*,"‡ which are not upright, but these inventions are of man's seeking and not of God's. Upon the whole, we may see that it is so far from be-

* If he was persuaded or influenced by Eve, yet as that persuasion or influence was not irresistible, but might have been resisted and effectually overcome, this makes no difference, because it was still Adam's voluntary act which he was not necessitated to do, but could or might have done otherwise. The same holds good of Eve, though tempted by an apostate spirit.

† Romans v. 12. ‡ Ecclesiasticus vii. 29.

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ing impossible for God to have made all men *sinless* or without sin, that he actually did make them so; *very good, upright, in righteousness, and true holiness*. Thus far the holy scriptures assure us that God created man sinless, and consequently happy, and also that he might have continued so if he had not wilfully (though not necessarily) disobeyed God's command. If we examine reason, it also confirms the same, viz. That an Almighty God not only might have made all men sinless and happy at the first creation, but that, as being Almighty, he might and could have made all men in such a manner that they could not possibly have sinned or been unhappy, because it was possible to the Almighty to have necessitated them by nature to do continually what is right and good, as he has necessitated a stone by some unknown cause to fall. We can form a conception of such beings in our minds, and consequently an Almighty Being could have made such, as this implies no contradiction. If God could not possibly make such beings, he must himself be an imperfect and impotent being. But if we consider man in his present state, we find him so inconsistent with himself, and such a mixture of greatness and meanness, virtue and vice, high and low desires in him, as to me is wholly unaccountable, if I look upon him to have been so created by an Almighty and infinitely perfect Being. Thus reason concurs with revelation to demonstrate that man was created sinless and upright, but that he has fallen from his primitive rectitude into the present state of degeneracy and corruption, which we are now in by nature, and which is called by St. Paul "the old man with his deeds."* Thus by one man, Adam, sin entered into the world, and all his posterity, in consequence thereof, became subject to sin, corruption, and death, "by nature the children of wrath."† So as sin entered into the world by one man, a free agent and self-determining being, it also yet continues in it by men, free agents and self-determining beings. If God was the

* Colossians iii 9. † Ephesians ii. 3.

author and only cause of all that we call sin, as for instance, of all the murders, robberies, incests, perjuries, and frauds which are committed, and necessitates men by himself, or any other thing, to commit them, so that they cannot possibly do otherwise, and then punishes men for so doing; he appears to me the most sinful and wicked, as well as the most tyrannical and cruel being in the universe, nay as wicked as all the wicked men in the world put together can possibly be, because he is the *author and only cause* of all the sin and wickedness that ever has been, is, or is to be. But says Dr. Priestley, (page 121) "If therefore, the Divine Being be influenced by a disinterested regard to the happiness of his creatures, and adopt such measures as are best calculated to secure that great and glorious end, this will certainly sanctify the means that are really necessary to accomplish it, with respect to him, who chooses those means only with a view to that end, and who cannot be mistaken in the application of them." It is very true, that if God's design in causing sin be done out of regard to the happiness of his creatures, and that it is really necessary to accomplish this, that sin and wickedness be actually committed, *this end will certainly sanctify the means*, really used out of necessity to accomplish so desirable an event as universal happiness. But if God cannot possibly effect this by any other means, but by causing sin and wickedness in order to complete so gracious a design, he may be a good God, but he cannot be Almighty or All-powerful, because he wants power to accomplish the happiness of his creatures by any other means than that of causing and using sin and wickedness for this purpose. On the contrary, if he be Almighty and can effect the same by righteous and virtuous means only, he cannot be a good God, because he causes and uses sin and wickedness in the world with intention and design, and yet needlessly. But, suppose, as Dr. Priestley says, (page 109) That "all evils will terminate in good, and that the greatest sum of good, could not in the nature of things be attained by any other means;" and, suppose, that God adopts such measures (however sinful) as are necessary

cessary and best calculated to secure that great and glorious end, the happiness of his creatures : Suppose all this, I say, that sin is necessary to produce the greatest sum of good, and that God causes it for that end, the natural consequence is, that every preacher who exclaims against the sins and wickedness of men, or who reproves or finds fault with another for any crime by him committed, exclaims against and reproves that thing of which God *is the author and only cause*, and what, if it had been undone, would have prevented and diminished the greatest good ; nay, our Saviour himself, who came to destroy sin, came to destroy those measures which God adopted as necessary, and best calculated to secure the happiness of his creatures ; for Dr. Priestley says, (page 124) “ If he (God) prefers that scheme in which
 “ there is the greatest prevalence of virtue and happiness, we have all the evidence that can be given of
 “ his being infinitely holy and benevolent, notwithstanding the mixture of vice and misery there may be
 “ in it.” If this be true, we certainly ought not to endeavour in the least to counteract any part of such scheme, or any one thing that is doing, let the mixture of vice and misery be ever so great ; because if we do, we endeavour to counteract God’s providence, which is (in every action and every event that is or shall be) bringing about the greatest sum of good, and oftentimes by means of what we call evil, and which cannot be effected by *any other means* ; consequently we should never struggle or endeavour to hinder the completion of any thing, however vicious or miserable. “ If any person, says Dr. Priestley, (pages 125 and 126) notwithstanding this representation, should be alarmed
 “ at the idea of God’s being the proper cause of all evil, natural and moral, he should consider that, upon any
 “ scheme that admits of the divine pre-science, the same consequences follow. For still God is supposed
 “ to foresee and *permit*, what it was in his power to
 “ to have prevented, which is the very same thing as
 “ *willing*, and *directly causing* it. If I certainly know
 “ that my child, if left to his liberty, will fall into a
 “ river, and be drowned, and I do not restrain him,

" I certainly mean that he should be drowned, and my
 " conduct cannot admit of any other construction.
 " Upon all schemes, therefore, that admit of the divine
 " pre-science, and consequently the permission of evil,
 " natural and moral, the supposition of God's virtually
 " willing and causing it is unavoidable." — I have
 before, in Section III. denied absolute universal pre-science to be a necessary attribute of God; therefore this argument stands or falls, in a great measure, with the truth or falsehood of what in this respect I maintain; which is, That Almighty God can certainly and absolutely fore-know all actions and events, (however minute or numerous) which ever shall be acted, or come to pass to all eternity, because he can fore-ordain or pre-determine every future action and event; yet, notwithstanding this, certain and absolute fore-knowledge is not so necessary and inseparable an attribute of God; but that he both can create, and actually has created, a set of self-determining beings, in our language called men, and that, when created, he can permit them to choose and to act frequently in many things at pleasure, or not to act, without any pre-determination or fore-knowledge of what they will actually do. For further satisfaction concerning this (see Section III). I cannot by any means perceive the force of Dr. Priestley's argument, in order to establish this point, that permitting any thing is the same, or equivalent to, *willing, and directly causing it*. I may certainly see a child drowning, and may permit it to be drowned when I have it in my power to take it out of the water and save it, yet if I did not intermeddle any way with either the child or the water, in such a case I may be blameable for neglecting to save the child; yet I cannot, in any sense of the words, be said directly to cause the drowning of the child, nor even to will it, because I willed nothing about it, but left it entirely to Providence, without interfering in the least. Suppose I saw a man pick Dr. Priestley's pocket, and could have restrained or prevented him, yet I walked on unconcerned and permitted it, do I by this directly cause Dr. Priestley's pocket to be picked? Certainly no. Likewise as God has created

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man a free agent, and permits him to act in many things at pleasure, can God be said to be the direct cause of his committing sin, when he no way influenced him thereto, nor in the least interfered in the matter? If, in such a case, God irresistibly restrained the man, so far he took away his power of self-determination, and necessitated him in such a manner, that he could not possibly do otherwise than he did do, thus making him a necessarian. Upon this plan of uninterrupted necessitation, as observed before, God is the necessitating author and *only cause* of all sin, and consequently a most sinful being. This appears so clearly from what I have before said, that I shall say no more about it here, especially since I do not admit the necessary, absolute, and universal pre-science of God, which is the very foundation of what Dr. Priestley is endeavouring to establish. Having thus acquitted Almighty God from the dreadful charge of being the author and *only cause* of sin, I shall proceed to the next Section.

SECTION XI.

How far the Scriptures are favourable to the Doctrine of Necessity.

DR. PRIESTLEY in this Section, (page 133) gives up this point in a great measure, saying, "Not that I think the sacred writers were, strictly speaking, *necessarians*, for they were not philosophers." It is very true they were not necessarians, for the very purport, design, and general meaning of the scriptures signify man to be a free agent, a self-determining being, with power of choice to act or not to act in many things at pleasure. Again, Dr. Priestley says in the same page, "very probably had they (the sacred writers) been interrogated on the subject, they
"would

“ would have appeared not to be apprised of the proper extent of the necessarian scheme, and would have answered in a manner unfavourable to it.” I thank Dr. Priestley for his candour in acknowledging that the inspired writers themselves were neither necessarians, nor were apprised of the doctrine in its proper extent, nor yet believed it, because he allows if they had been interrogated upon the subject they would have answered in a manner unfavourable to it. Indeed all their writings are a perpetual standing testimony of this truth. Yet notwithstanding these honest assertions that the sacred writers were not necessarians, Dr. Priestley produces several texts from their writings to prove the same doctrine they did not profess nor believe, but of asked about it, would have answered in a manner unfavourable to it. However, Dr. Priestley (page 134) to support the doctrine of necessity, says, “ That God was considered “ by the sacred writers as the author of the good dispositions and good works of men.” To prove this he produces, Deut. xxx. 6, Jer. xxvi. 7, and xxxii. 39, Ez. xi. 19, and xxxvi. 26, Acts xvi. 14, John vi. 27, &c. 1. Cor. iiii. 6, &c. Phil. i. 6, and ii. 12, 13, and Jude v. 24. To which I answer, that I believe no man who believes the holy scriptures to be true, can deny God to be the author of good dispositions and good works in men, or that he influences them, and assists them in a supernatural and extraordinary manner by his grace and holy spirit; yet that extraordinary influence and assistance is not in general so violent, but men may resist and overcome the same. Accordingly we find St. Paul commanding those he writ to in this manner, “ Grieve not the Holy Spirit.”* “ Quench “ not the spirit.”† The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews also threatens them with a very sore punishment, “ who have done despite unto the spirit of “ grace.”‡ There are many more places to the same purpose. I shall mention (to confirm this the more) the story of St. Paul’s conversion as related by himself, before King Agrippa, with all its miraculous circum-

* Eph. iv. 30. † 1 Thes. v. 19. ‡ Heb. x. 29.

stances in the 26th chapter of Acts. The whole affair was so miraculous, astonishing, and supernatural, that one would suppose his conversion and obedience to have been irresistible and absolutely necessary and unavoidable; yet we find by his self-determining power he could have resisted the whole, been disobedient, and have proceeded in his old way, persecuting the christians. He says, verse 19, "whereupon, O King Agrippa, I *was not disobedient* to the heavenly vision." He does not say, I could not be disobedient, nor does he so much as hint so. I was not disobedient, says he. This evidently implies that he might or could have been disobedient, notwithstanding so great an influence to the contrary. Hence we may perceive, that although God frequently influences men to good dispositions, and to good actions also, yet he does not irresistibly impel or necessitate men to do them. But, says Dr. Priestley, (page 136) "All prayers for good dispositions go upon the same principles, and these are frequent in the scriptures." To establish this he produces, 1 Chron. xxix. 18, Ps. li. 10, Rom. xv. 13, Eph. iii. 16, 1 Thes. v. 23, Heb. xiii. 20, 1 Pet. v. 10, besides some passages from our Common Prayer Book. To this I answer, that certainly God will give good dispositions as well as grace and extraordinary assistance to those who ask as they ought to do, according to that promise of our Saviour, "Ask and ye shall receive;" but these prayers, and all others, make strongly against the doctrine of necessity, because, as before observed, (page 64) to what purpose could either the sacred writers or any other person pray, if every future action and event be so absolutely fixed already, that it cannot possibly be otherwise than it is to be? Dr. Priestley adds, (page 138) "That the evil actions of men also, which necessarily imply bad dispositions, do in the language of scripture take place in consequence of the particular appointment of God." To prove this, he produces, Gen. xlv. 5, 8, Ex. vi. 21, Jos. xi. 20, Judges ix. 23, 1 Sam. vii. 25, 2 Chron. xviii. Math. xi. 25, John xii. 39, Deut. xxix. 4, 2 Thes. ii. 11, Acts li. 23, and iv. 27. We should here observe, that

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Dr. Priestley does not say that all the evil actions of men take place in consequence of God's appointment, but only some particular ones, which he mentions out of the scriptures; but as before observed, (Section III); we cannot conclude, that if a thing has been so once, twice, or a great number of times, that it always was, is, and will be so. It seems very strange and unaccountable, if the evil actions of men always take place in consequence of God's appointment, that there is no positive assertion of that kind in the whole scriptures, but that the general scope, design, and intention of the scriptures, and the very revelation thereof by God to mankind, for their benefit and instruction, signify the contrary, insomuch that even Dr. Priestley himself, as before mentioned, acknowledges that the sacred writers were not, *strictly speaking, necessarians, nor were apprised of the doctrine in its proper extent*, and if interrogated upon it, would have answered unfavourably to it. Is it not then fair from his own words, to conclude thus? If the texts he has quoted, or any other of their writings, teach the doctrine of necessity, then the sacred writers when they writ them, (as they were not necessarians) writ and taught what they were not apprised of, and what, if interrogated upon, they would have answered unfavourably to the very doctrine they wrote and taught, and consequently that they wrote and taught what they neither knew, believed, nor profess'd to believe. I wonder how Dr. Priestley came by such extraordinary knowledge, as to be able to discover in their writings, what the writers themselves (though divinely inspired) were not apprised of, nor appear to have known. Particular parts of any writing whatever, sacred or prophane, public or private, must always, if possible, be understood and interpreted so as to be consistent with the general scope, design, and intention of the whole, and if any part or parts cannot possibly be so understood, then the writing is an useless and unintelligible jargon, contradictory to, and inconsistent with, itself; an idea by no means compatible with the notions which every true christian must entertain of the sacred writings, as a revelation made by an all-knowing and infinitely wise God. Since then

Dr. Priestley allows that the sacred writers were not, *strictly speaking, necessitated, nor were apprised of the doctrine, &c.* and since the very nature and design of the revelation of these writings imply man to have free will and power of choice, to practise according to their doctrine or not, as every chapter testifies, we must construe these texts, last mentioned, so as to be consistent with the scope, intention, and design of the whole. In order to do this, I will not do as all the interpreters have done which I have read, who maintain free will, that is, I will not assert that God may be in some measure said to do what he only permits to be done, a thing I can by no means admit, because permission and action are so very different, and also, because if this be allowed, God really does every thing, even the most sinful and wicked actions, as he certainly permits them all to be done. Besides, I can never think of interpreting any part of the scriptures, the revelation of God, but in as literal a manner as it is possible to be interpreted, provided I do not, by so doing, make one part to contradict another, or to contradict the design and intention of the whole.

With these particulars in view I shall proceed to examine the texts last quoted by Dr. Priestley, and shall first observe, that those evil actions, above-mentioned as evil, never took place in consequence of the particular appointment of God, but only as just punishments for some great and crying sins which the people appointed to do them had been guilty of before, and which sins deserved some heavy and remarkable judgment from Almighty God, and for which some judgment had before in reality been denounced by him. If then God did harden their hearts, or appointed and decreed them by way of punishment to do some action, or series of actions, which would hasten their destruction, when they were already become "unto every good work reprobate*," he is still good and just notwithstanding. First, he is good, because he has given to men in general, reason, which is a law to

* Titus i. 16.

those " who have no law, a law written in their hearts " to know good and evil, and a power of self-determination enabling them to choose either; besides, he frequently, without doubt, in an inward and secret manner influences all men to goodness and virtue, and some in an outward and open manner, as he did Cornelius; yet he leaves them, as before observed, at liberty to act contrary to, or co-operate with, such influence. As a further evidence of his goodness, he has vouchsafed to give an outward and glorious revelation of his holy will to a great part of mankind in the holy scriptures. Secondly, he is just, because he thus punishes men for their many and grievous sins; and this he does frequently by hardening them, and causing them to do, or attempt to do, some act or acts, by which they bring some great and public judgment and destruction upon themselves, and some good to God's peculiar people, thus becoming an example to all the people around, who are frequently in a miraculous manner, by such means, delivered by God out of their tyrannical and wicked hands. Although this general answer to these texts seems very sufficient, yet as they are the most material texts to establish Dr. Priestley's doctrine of necessity, I will be a little more particular. I shall pass over the first text about Joseph and his brethren, because I have spoken to it before, (page 99) and will proceed to the second, concerning the hardening of Pharaoh's heart by God, so that he would not let the Children of Israel go. Pharaoh and the Egyptians had been guilty of great and grievous sins before, by oppressing the Children of Israel in various ways, so that God said to Moses, " behold the cry of the Children of Israel is come unto me, and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians have oppressed them †." The crying sin was grievous oppression of God's people, by making them slaves, and keeping them in bondage. This was a sin against reason, or against " the law written in their

* Romans ii. 14, 15. † Acts x. . . ‡ Exodus iii. 9.

" hearts," as before observed, He says again, " I have
 " heard the groaning of the Children of Israel, whom
 " the Egyptians keep in bondage. I am the Lord, and
 " I will bring you out from under the burdens of Egypt,
 " and I will rid you out of their bondage *." As a
 punishment for this crying sin, God denounces these
 judgments: " I will stretch out my hand and smite
 " Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the
 " midst thereof †." And again, " I will harden Pha-
 " raoh's heart, and multiply my signs and wonders in
 " the land of Egypt ‡." Then follows the good ends
 proposed by God in executing the two judgments here
 denounced, viz. smiting Egypt, and hardening Pha-
 raoh's heart that he should not hearken unto them,
 which was to make the Children of Israel " know that
 " he was the Lord their God §;" and further, to use
 God's own words, " that I may lay my hand upon
 " Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, and my people,
 " the Children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt, by
 " great judgments, and the Egyptians shall know that I
 " am the Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon
 " Egypt, and bring out the Children of Israel from
 " among them ¶." Again: It was " to make Pharaoh
 " know that he was the Lord ||," and " that there was
 " no God like him *," and " that he was the Lord in
 " the midst of the earth †;" and not only to convince
 his people the Children of Israel, and Pharaoh, and the
 Egyptians, that he was God, but by a succession of
 miracles to make himself known over all the world,
 " that my name may be declared throughout all the
 " earth ‡." It is true God could have punished Pha-
 raoh by many other ways for his sin in oppressing his
 people, &c. He could have struck him immediately
 dead, or he could have tortured and tormented him by
 some long, tedious, and painful distemper; or he
 could have left him to his own power of self-determi-
 nation, which probably would have been to let the

* Exodus vi. 5, 6. † Exodus iii. 20. ‡ Exodus vii. 3.
 § Exodus vi. 67. ¶ Exodus vii. 4, 5. || Exodus vii. 17. * Ex-
 odus viii. 20. † Exodus viii. 22. ‡ Exodus ix. 26.

Children of Israel go, after the first or second miracle; accordingly we find that he was so affected by the miracle of the frogs, that he said to Moses, "Intreat the Lord that he may take away the frogs from me and my people, and I will let the people go." But it was God's will and pleasure to harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the Children of Israel go, to the end that by such an astonishing and stupendous a succession of miracles as was never before exhibited to the world, he might make himself known to the Children of Israel, to Pharaoh, to the other Egyptians, and to all the world, that he was God, an almighty and wonder-working God, so that there was none like him, inasmuch that even Pharaoh's magicians confessed, "this is the finger of God." Now, though God did thus harden Pharaoh's heart, it was only a just judgment or punishment inflicted upon him in consequence of his former sins, in order to make him continue obstinate, so that his final destruction might be the more notorious and astonishing; for, says God, "in very deed for this have I stirred thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout the earth." For this end God hardened his heart, and for this end he stirred him up, or excited him, so that he would not let the people go. We ought to consider here, that God did not harden him, stir him up, or excite him to any sin or evil action, but only not to let

Exodus viii. 8. † Exodus viii. 19. ‡ Exodus ix. 16.
 § I have translated it (stirred thee up) instead of raised thee up, as it is in our translation. And this I have done on the authority of St. Paul, an inspired writer, who quotes this passage in his Epistle to the Romans, chap. ix. verse 17. and there renders it by the word *ἐγείρω*, in Latin, *excitavi*, I have stirred up, or excited; according to which St. Peter uses *διεγείρω*, 2 Peter i. 13, which is the same radical word, and very near synonymous, and which in our translation is rendered there to stir up; whereas by the common translation, I have raised thee up, it is generally understood, that God created, made, or raised up Pharaoh for this very end, and that he was determined upon this before he created him.

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the Children of Israel go. This was not evil in itself, because, as subjects, Pharaoh had a right to keep them and protect them in their just rights and properties; but, instead of doing this, which every king ought to do by all his subjects, he most grievously oppressed them with bondage and slavery; nay, he even ordered all their male children to be killed at the birth*. These were the sins Pharaoh had been guilty of, the evils he had done. For these God was resolved to punish him, and that by hardening his heart, or stirring him up, and exciting him so that he would not let them go, till at last he was brought to a signal, miraculous, and condign punishment; not a punishment for refusing to let the people go, which was not evil in itself, but a punishment for oppressing them before, and from which oppression God, as the sovereign of the universe, had a right to deliver them. Almighty God may certainly, with equal justice and propriety, punish a notorious sinner for his sins, by hardening his heart, or stirring him up, so that he necessarily brings on his own death and destruction, as he has to kill or destroy him by any other judgment; as, for instance, by lightning, a fever, or any other means. No evil could arise to any one by Pharaoh's heart being hardened, save to Pharaoh and his host, who were before justly doomed to destruction for their oppression and wickedness; not to the Israelites, who were God's peculiar people,† because God had determined to bring them forth and deliver them "with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and "with great terribleness,‡" notwithstanding Pharaoh's refusal to let them go; not to the rest of the world, be-

* Exodus i. 16.

† Though they were considered as a body of men peculiarly favoured by Almighty God, and so called his peculiar people, yet that does not make for necessity, by holding forth God as partial in favour of them. God may certainly have a more particular regard for one nation than another, and show them peculiar favours, while at the same time he does more for every nation and people than they justly deserve, though perhaps he does the most for some one peculiar people.

‡ Deuteronomy xxvi. 8.

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cause they were unconcerned in it. Thus God, by hardening Pharaoh's heart, or stirring him up to keep his subjects, a thing not evil or sinful in itself, brought a just judgment upon Pharaoh and upon the Egyptians, before denounced against them; such an one as was very sufficient to convince all the world that he is God, and that there is none like him in all the earth. God himself says, "Behold I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians," "and they shall follow them; and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host," by punishing them in so miraculous a manner for their crying sin of grievous oppression. Accordingly, when the Israelites saw it, "the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses." In the next text, Jos. xi. 20, the Lord is said to have hardened the hearts of the Canaanites, so as to go and fight Israel, and be destroyed. This also was a just judgment for their sins: "For the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out before thee." Their wickedness is particularized: "Every abomination to the Lord which he hateth have they done unto their gods, for even their sons and daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods." For this wickedness and these abominations, God orders the Israelites, by the mouth of Moses, thus: "Thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth, but thou shalt utterly destroy them; that they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods." After this, was it any more unjust or evil in God to bring about their punishment by hardening them to go against Israel to battle, that they might be so killed, than it would have been to kill them by a pestilence, or any other thing? Or, can we reasonably conclude, that because God thus justly appoints and brings to punishment wicked men for some remarkable wickedness, that he consequently appoints and orders every good and evil action of every man whatever? The next text is, Judges ix. 23,

* Exodus xiv. 17. † Exodus xiv. 31. ‡ Deut. ix. 4.

§ Deut. xiii. 31. || Deut. xx. 16, 17, 18.

where it is said that God sent an evil spirit betwixt Abimelech and the men of Shechem. This was also done as a punishment for their sins. It was as follows: "That the cruelty done to the three score and ten sons of Jerubaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech, their brother which slew them, and upon the men of Shechem which aided him in the killing of his brethren." Accordingly it is said, "Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father in slaying his seventy brethren. And all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render on their heads†". But does it follow that God is the *author and only cause* of all the murders, &c. that have been, or are committed, because he sometimes stirs up a strife betwixt very wicked men, not fit to live in the world, being murderers, robbers, grievous oppressors, or otherwise pests of society, and of consequence justly doomed to death, in such a manner that one of them shall be the cause of another's death, and perhaps shall sometimes become mutual executioners of a sentence passed upon them, in justice to the rest of mankind? Would it be any crime, sin, or evil in our legislators, to make a law or pass a decree, that one murderer, robber, or other criminal, should be obliged to kill, execute, or otherwise punish another? Or, if the legislators so ordered this, would it follow that they were the *authors and only causes* of every murder and every quarrel? Certainly not. Neither if God so orders or decrees that one criminal, or very wicked man, shall kill, destroy, or otherwise punish another, does it follow that he is the *author and only cause* of every murder and every quarrel betwixt men? The next text relates to the Sons of Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 25. "They hearkened not to the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them;" or, because they were justly doomed to death for the great and crying sins which they had been guilty of, as will appear to any one who will read the whole chapter. The same holds good concerning Ahab,

* Judges ix. 24. † Judges ix. 56, 57.

2 Chron. xviii. He also was justly devoted to destruction for his wickedness, because "he did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him." "He went and served Baal, and worshipped him." "He reared up an altar of Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built." He unjustly deprived Naboth of his vineyard §, besides many other crimes, for all which he had a heavy judgment denounced against him: "because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord, behold I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity ||." After all this, was it not just and right in God to harden him, or stir him up to go to battle with an intention to cause him to fall there? for though the Lord be said to send a lying spirit into the mouths of his prophets to deceive him, yet it can mean no more than that he, by some means or other, influenced him, or caused him to go. The whole narration is so plainly allegorical, and embellished with figurative expressions, that it would be quite inconsistent to take it in the literal sense; it is therefore absolutely necessary to understand the whole as a parabolical representation of this plain fact, That God did, by some means, cause Ahab to go to battle, that he might be there killed, as a just punishment for his great and manifold sins. This will appear to any one who reads the whole story, which represents God as a great sovereign, with *two hands, right and left*, and consulting with a number of spirits, as *counsellors to him* in the business, which spirits are represented as debating and contriving one with another, and also *advising God* how to proceed in the business, who seems to *want advice*. All this evidently demonstrates the necessity of the passage being not taken or construed literally and strictly, but in some manner as before observed. As the remainder of the texts last cited may be easily understood from what I have said concerning these I have treated of, I think it needless to say any more, and shall therefore proceed to page 144, where Dr. Priestley

* 1 Kings xvi. 30. † Kings xvi. 3. ‡ Kings xvi. 32.

§ 1 Kings xxi. 1, 16. || 1 Kings xxi. 20, 21.

says, "That such things as come to pass in the common course of Providence were considered by the pious writers of the scriptures as more immediately administered by himself, overlooking second causes." The passages quoted to confirm this, are Ps. lxxv. 9, 10, and 104. 27, 28, 29, 30. I never disputed but that every thing in the inanimate world came to pass by God's immediate appointment and operation, unless where free agents interfere. Without this, the greatest and most learned philosopher in the world cannot account for a stone or any other thing falling to the earth, as observed in the second section, not to mention a thousand other instances in the material world; neither do I deny but that God can, when he pleases, and frequently does, providentially and supernaturally interfere in the care, direction, and actions of the animate world, even those of free agents; and this is the proper basis or foundation of all prayer to Almighty God. But Dr. Priestley adds, (page 145) "what we call the common events and accidents of life, are all, in the language of scripture, the express appointment of God." To prove this, he quotes Exodus xxi. 13; Psalm xvi. 23;* Matthew x. 29; 1 Sam. ii. 6, 7; Daniel ii. 20; Amos iv. 7.

It is not said in any of these texts, that all the common events and accidents of life are expressly appointed by God, but only that they sometimes are so. God undoubtedly can interfere in every event of man's life, and act as he pleases; nay, God even does act in this manner in all cases, unless where he leaves things to the free agency and self-determining power of some other being. As to the first text, Exodus xxi. 13, "If a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand;" this plainly shows, that sometimes man does lay in wait, and kill another, without God's interference; and also that sometimes man does not lay in wait, but God delivers another into his hand, most probably by way of punishment for some great and

* Dr. Priestley has here cited the wrong place, it should be Proverbs xvi. 33.

grievous sin by him before committed, as in the example before-mentioned. So also in the second text, Psalm xvi. 23, "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." It is very true the Lord can, if he pleases, wholly dispose of the lot when cast, but it is equally true that he does not always interfere; if he always did, any wickedness might at any time be discovered by lot; whereas the contrary is evident from several parts of scripture. When Saul wanted to know (by casting lots) who the offender was, "Saul said unto the Lord God of Israel, give a perfect lot *." Likewise the Eleven Apostles, when going to make choice of a Twelfth by lot, "prayed and said, thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen †;" and the lot fell upon Matthias. If God always interfered in casting lots, so that the event could not possibly be otherwise than it was certainly appointed to be, why were these prayers offered to God for a particular interference, *then* to give a perfect lot? The same kind of reasoning, compared with other scriptures, will answer all the other texts. But, says Dr. Priestley, (p. 146) "the thoughts, and dispositions of men, are also represented as being under the secret direction of God, as Proverbs xxi. 1, 'The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water. He turneth it whithersoever he will.' Very true, whenever he pleases to interfere, he turns it whithersoever he will. God's absolute will is irresistible, when he pleases; consequently, if he wills not to intermeddle with the king's heart, which he certainly can do, then the king does every thing within his power as he himself pleases, according to his power of self-determination.—"Ambitious and wicked men," says Dr. Priestley, (page 146) are after spoken of as "the instruments of Divine Providence." As Psalms xvii. 13, "Arise, O Lord, deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword." Very true, as before observed, they are often and justly used to execute God's

* 1 Sam. xiv. 41. † Acts i. 24.

avenging judgment upon other wicked men and grievous offenders. But pray, why may not the Almighty use a wicked man as his sword to execute his vengeance upon another, with as much justice and propriety, as he may use the pestilence or any other judgment? This will also serve as an answer to Isaiah x. 5, &c. where Dr. Priestley observes, (page 147) "the subserviency of the proud King of Assyria to the designs of Divine Providence." We find God says, "I will send him against an hypocritical nation; and against the people of my wrath."* Thus the King of Assyria, a proud, wicked man, was influenced and caused by God, to execute his just and righteous judgments upon an hypocritical nation, the people of God's wrath, a wicked and unrighteous people. The same holds good of Jeremiah li. 20, mentioned by Dr. Priestley (page 148). Here is a conqueror used as an instrument in God's hands to execute his righteous judgments upon wicked nations and kingdoms. Upon the whole, it may be observed that we never find God persecuting, punishing, and destroying righteous nations, or righteous individuals, but assisting, encouraging, and protecting them, whilst he is frequently recorded in the scriptures to have punished and utterly destroyed wicked and unrighteous nations and individuals from off the face of the earth: And this he does by what instruments he pleases, without being necessitated to act just in that precise manner he does act, and without being the *author* and *only cause* of all evil actions whatever, even such as are sometimes done by wicked men against the most righteous, or without being the immediate author or cause of evil in any sense of the words.

* Isaiah x. 6.

SECTION XII.

The Calvinistic Doctrine of Predestination,
compared with the Philosophical Doc-
trine of Necessity.

AS I believe neither of these two doctrines, I cannot perceive that I have any thing to do with such a comparison; nor why I should follow Dr. Priestley, by considering "in what they agree, and in what they differ." I shall therefore only make this remark, viz. That the principal difference which I can see, consists in this: The Calvinists maintain the future happiness or misery of all men, without exception, to be fore-known and appointed by God, so that the decree and appointment cannot possibly be reversed, nor happen otherwise than it is absolutely and certainly determined and appointed to be; whereas the Philosophical Necessarian carries this to a greater extent, and maintains; that not only the future happiness or misery of all men, but every other action and event in the universe, which ever has come to pass, does come to pass, or ever will come to pass, could not possibly be otherwise. Dr. Priestley says, (page 96) "no action or event could possibly be otherwise than it has been, is, or is to be," because says he, "all things past, present, and to come, are precisely what the author of nature intended them." Both these doctrines appear to me directly contrary to reason, and also to scripture. The Calvinistic Doctrine, which is a part of the doctrine of universal necessity, is contrary to many texts, and particularly to this, "as I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live."* Thus God

* Ezekiel xxxiii. 18.

is so far from having appointed and absolutely decreed the death, destruction, and misery of the wicked, that he takes a solemn oath to the contrary, that he has no pleasure therein. He says, "that his pleasure is that he should return from his ways and live."* He wishes and desires this, he had rather it was so, and accordingly he earnestly exhorts them thus, "turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?"†: A good and merciful God would certainly never thus mock any men, by exhorting them to do what he fore-knew they would not do, and had appointed things so that they neither could nor would do as they were exhorted to do. On the contrary, if they were absolutely appointed and necessitated to do what they were exhorted to do, and could not possibly do otherwise, to what purpose did he so earnestly exhort them? It is acknowledged in effect by Dr. Priestley himself, that the necessarian doctrine, *strictly speaking*, is not contained in the holy scriptures, and indeed if it was not so acknowledged, almost every page testifies the same. Upon the whole, what I have said, I hope will prove sufficient to establish mans free agency and power of self-determination, to clear a good and just God from being the author and only cause of sin and evil; and also to overturn the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity as maintained by Dr. Priestley, from the very foundation.

* Ezekiel xviii. 23. † Ezekiel xxxiii. 11.

F I N I S

